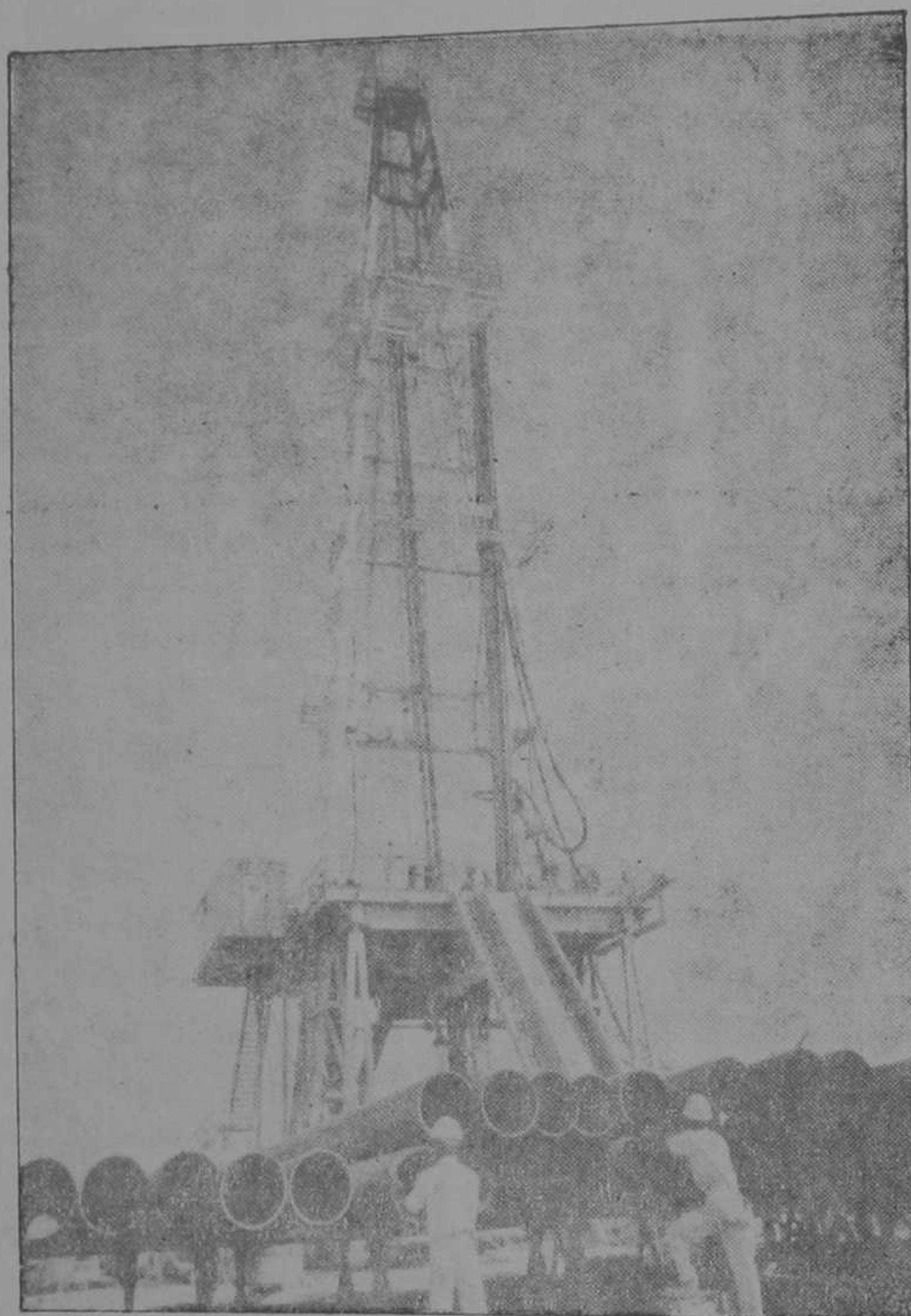


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Walajapettai Venkataramana Bhagavathar* (1781-1874)

By

Sangita Bhooshanam M. A. NARASIMHACHAR

The term Bhagavathar is generally applied to one who speaks and sings about God and propagates Bhakthi cult. In this sense Saint Tyagaraja is a Bhagavathar nonpareil. It also happens that amongst his principal disciples there are three persons known by the appellation 'Bhagavathar' viz. Walajapettai Venkataramana Bhagavathar and the Umayalpuram Brothers, Krishna Bhagavathar and Sundara Bhagavathar. In particular, posterity owes 'it' to the first-named for preserving and propagating the compositions of the Saint as also his life history. He has been truly called the Boswell of Tyagaraja. He also became a composer in his own right. We owe it to the Sourashtra Sabha of Madurai which has carefully preserved the Bhagavathar's works as he belonged to that community.

Ancestry

Amongst the Sourashtra Brahmin community, which has a distinct identity in the Southern Tamil region, there was one Kuppayya Bhagavathar who was a distinguished scholar in Mathematics, Astrology, Astronomy, Sanskrit, Telugu and the Sourashtra languages. His son Nannu swami was the father of Venkataramana, who was born on 18-2-1781. The grandfather realised the bright future that awaited Venkataramana and bestowed great attention in training him in our ancient lore and the languages. The young boy evinced

keen interest in practising 'Hatayoga'. He had a handsome personality and good physique. Thanks to his grandfather who fostered his musical leanings, he became proficient in Carnatic classical music. But having heard about the reputation of Sri Tyagarajaswami as a great devotee of Sri Rama and as also a great composer and musical genius, he made up his mind to become the Saint's disciple.

Bhagavathar's family moved from Ariyalur and settled in Ayyampettai (also known as Ramachandrapuram) in Tanjore district. He was a great devotee of Sri Prasanna Rajagopalaswami, the presiding deity of the local temple. During the course of his daily worship and prayer, Sri Tyagarajaswami used to begin and end his Bhajans in Sourashtra and Kannada-Sourashtra ragas. Bhagavathar attended the bhajana for nearly three years. On one of those occasions, Venkataramana went to the residence of the Saint and introduced himself in all humility and gave expression to his long cherished desire to become the Saint's disciple. His joy knew no bounds when he was accepted as such. Thus began a memorable Guru-Sishya association which proved providential in perpetuating the Tyagaraja musical tradition.

The Devoted Disciple

Venkataramana began a life of service to his Guru and God. He used to get up

* The third article in the series on Tyagaraja's disciples.

early in the morning and after finishing his ablutions, collect Tulasi and many fragrant flowers in Ayyampettai and carry them to Tiruvaivaryu in time for the evening worship of Sri Rama by the Saint. During Sri Rama Navami, Venkataramana would bring special garlands of Tulasi only. The Guru was so pleased that it inspired him to compose the famous song in Mayamalavagowla- 'Tulasi Dalamulache'. An anecdote goes that when he sang the lines in the Charanam (Saraseeruha, Punnaga, Champaka, Patala, etc., referring to the names of different flowers with which he liked to worship the Lord, those very flowers fell at the feet of the Lord, though he had only Tulasi leaves in his hand.

The Miracle

The Swami attributed this miracle to the devotion of his Sishya Venkataramana, who used to bring Tulasi in large quantities for the Pooja daily and blessed the latter with the song 'Gnyana Mosaragarada' in the raga 'Shadvidha margini' (as mentioned in the life history of the Bhagavathar). Thus Venkataramana served the Saint for more than 30 years and received his Guru's blessings. He used to render faithfully the Saint's krithis, kept record of them and taught his disciples in turn.

Thus did he become the senior and principal disciple of the Saint. He would attentively listen whenever a song poured forth from the lips of the Saint during his worship of Sri Rama and after memorising them, he would note them down in his house in Tiruvaivaryu faithfully and with notation during each night and then return to Ayyampettai in the morning. That evening he would show them to his Guru

and sing them and receive his blessings as they were inspired compositions, the value of which the Saint himself was often not conscious.

Wedding Gift

Sri Tyagarajaswami had an only daughter by name Seethalakshmi, whom he loved very much. He celebrated his daughter's marriage with Kuppuswami Iyer. Most of his disciples and admirers brought presents to the bride. Venkataramana, in his turn, presented a gem-studded colour portrait of Sri Kodanda Ramachandramurthi in the company of Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, painted by the Bhagavathar's disciple Ellayya along with lace dresses, etc. That beautiful portrait inspired the Saint to sing that immortal krithi in Mohanam 'Nannu Palimpa Nadachi Vachchitavo' (Did you walk all the way) from Ayyampettai, to protect me? This portrait found a permanent place in the Pooja griha of the Saint. It is said that many attempts were made to steal this picture but did not succeed.

Nowka Charitram

The Saint was inspired to compose 'Nowka Charitram' in praise of the glory of Lord Krishna and taught this to Venkataramana. The latter realised the dramatic potential of this imaginary theme and translated it into Samskrit and recorded it on palm-leaves. Some persons who were jealous of the fame and name of the Saint after the publication of his 'Nowka Charitram' in Telugu for its lyrical and musical excellence, tried to provoke the anger of the Ruler of Tanjore by describing the work as erotic as it dealt with the dalliance of Sri Krishna with the Gopis in a manner that was not based on any authentic

source material and therefore one likely to spoil the minds of its readers. Thereupon the Ruler sent for the Saint and enjoined upon him to produce the original authority for his 'Nowka Charitram'. As this was an original and inspired work the Saint was in a quandary. At this juncture the Bhagavathar who came to know about his Guru's predicament went to Ayyampettai and dusting his old Samskrit manuscript, brought it and offered it to his Guru, who produced it before the Ruler to the utter chagrin of the detractors.

Lord Krishna's Grace

It was usual for the Bhagavathar to sing at the beginning and end of each day's pooja. Once the disciple could not reach Tiruvaivaryu in time from Ayyampettai. Tyagaraja was about to conclude the evening Pooja, when he noticed a young handsome boy approach his wife with a message. The message was to the effect that as Venkataramana was on his way, the pooja need not be concluded. Meanwhile the messenger boy vanished and was not traceable. Soon Venkataramana turned up and learnt about the mysterious messenger. He had not sent him. Everybody then concluded that it must have been the Lord Krishna himself. Tyagarajaswami greeted his disciple as 'Venkataramana Bhagavathar' for the first time. Another anecdote goes that once the Saint asked Bhagavathar not to compose songs on his own. After some time, the Guru himself appeared in a dream of the Bhagavathar and permitted him to compose songs on his own. Since then the Bhagavathar began composing and with the Mudra of his Guru dedicated it to the latter.

Marriage

Bhagavathar who was a Hatayogi was unwilling to get married, lest his devotion

to his Guru might be affected or reduced. But as per the desire of the Guru he got married to one Muthulakshmi in his 41st year in Ayyampettai and the invitation was drafted by the Guru himself, who also participated in the function. After the marriage, the Bhagavathar composed a number of songs in praise of Sri Kodandaramaswami and Sri Prasanna Rajagopalswami. It is claimed that he composed 2500 songs. But only about 150 are available. It is learnt that a large number of his compositions are sung by the members of the Sourashtra community living in various parts of Tamilnadu. He has composed 'Tyagaraja Mangalashtakam'. Thus, between the Guru, who was an ardent Bhakta of Sri Rama and the Sishya who was an ardent Krishna Bhakta, the two great Avatars of the Lord-Rama and Krishna have been glorified in songs of immense beauty.

Bhagavathar's disciples

Amongst his disciples was one Venkata Kavi Suri who was hailed as the Kalidasa of the South for his multifaceted scholarship. He had arranged a grand procession and public honours for his Guru at Madurai. The Ruler of Karvetnagar, who was a descendant of the Mysore royal family, became a disciple of the Bhagavathar and the latter had frequently to make the journey from Ayyampettai to Karvetnagar. To solve this problem, Bhagavathar shifted his residence to Walajapettai in his 53rd year. Some leading citizens of Walajapettai learnt about this decision of the Bhagavathar and purchased and provided him with house No. 21 in Raji street, for his personal residence. The latter installed the Sita, Hanuman, Lakshmana sameta Sri Rama idol granted by his Guru.

the Rukmini Satyabhama Sameta Krishna's idol (a family bequest) and a portrait of his Guru in the Bhajana Mandir attached to his house and offered daily worship to these. Tyagaraja came to Walajapettai and stayed in this house for 10 days and offered worship in response to his disciple's request. The street is now known as Venkataramana Bhagavathar street. He had two sons by name, Krishnaswami Bhagavathar and Ramaswami Bhagavathar and a daughter by name Tulasi Ammal.

Pilgrimage

During the course of his pilgrimage along with his disciples, Sri Tyagaraja Swami came to a place called Puttur on the way to Kancheepuram. Here, upon noticing a crowd that was bemoaning the accidental drowning in a well of one Seshayyar, he called upon his principal disciples, Thanjavoor Rama Rao and Tillaiathanam Rama Iyengar to sing the krithis "Lokavana chathura pahimam" (Begada) and "Emanichevo" (Sahana) respectively.

He asked the Bhagavathar to sing 'Na Jeevadhara' in the raga Bilahari. He then sprinkled Tulasi water on the body and revived the dead man. From here he went to Walajapettai and at the request of his disciple, he accepted the Bhagavathar's elder son Krishnaswami Bhagavathar as a disciple. The latter spent three years with Tyagarajaswami before he died.

The last phase

Sri Tyagarajaswami is said to have composed 25,000, krithis. But Bhagavathar has referred to his Guru as 'Sata Sahasra Keertana krithi Dheeram'. However, it is said that the Saint who anticipated the exact date of his 'Avatara Poorthi' as 'Pushya Bahula Panchami' of the year Parabhava handed over many of his valua-

ble musical manuscripts to his favourite disciple for safe custody. Amongst the many famous disciples of the Bhagavathar may be mentioned Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Chittoor Kanjari Radhakrishna Iyer, Ghatam Loka Narayana Iyer, Madurai Getti Nannuswami Bhagavathar, Madurai Neelamegham Venkatachala Bhagavathar, Srinivasa Bhagavathar, Bangalore Fiddle Muniswamiappa, the guru of Bangalore Nagarathnamma, Tiruvotriyur Ramaswami Iyer and of course, Mahakavi Venkata Suri.

Bhagavathar is said to have had a dream in which his Guru enjoined upon his disciples to observe Pushya Bahula Panchami every year, the day of his shedding his mortal coil, in a fitting manner with prayers, etc., and Ekadasi day when he attained 'Mukti' as the day of Guru Pooja. Even to this day in Walajapettai, Gurupooja day (Ekadasi) is observed in the Venkataramana Bhajana Mandir. Bhagavathar's son, Krishnaswami Bhagavathar is said to have been a witness to Sri Tyagarajaswami singing the famous 'Sahana' kriti 'Giripai Nelakonti' before his soul left his body.

Tyagaraja's Boswell

Venkataramana Bhagavathar spent the rest of his lifetime in prayer, and died in the year 1874 at Walajapettai. Posterity is indebted to him for his inestimable contribution to the Carnatic musical tradition, by preserving the works of his Guru intact and himself composing a number of krithis in the tradition of his Guru. Prof. P. Sambamurthi, called Bhagavathar a Boswell to Tyagaraja. Due to the inquisitiveness of the Bhagavathar we have some parts of the divine musical work 'Swaranava', which was in the possession of the Saint. Venkataramana Swamigal Jayanthi Committee of Ayyampettai, published many of the compositions of the Bhagavathar in 1971.

NEWS & NOTES

Dr. S. Ramanathan - A Saint of a Musician

It does not often fall to the lot of scribes to write about "complete" musicians, but the late Dr. S. Ramanathan was certainly one. Not a moment of his seventy-one fruitful years was wasted since his dedication to the art and science of music - not ours alone - was total. He had the attitude of one who assimilated the best in all kinds of current knowledge and so was at home in Western and Eastern music. An unfailing memory enabled him to quote from any treatise since Bharata's Natya Sastra and Silappadikaram down to the latest authority, with ease and precision.

Those who heard his series of lucid talks in 1987 on the history and development of Karnatak music have been well and truly educated on the evolution of our music to its present day level. Dr. Ramanathan believed in educating audiences and even his concerts bore the stamp of that zeal, to the seeming detriment of concert thrills. His demonstrations of "A day with Tyagaraja" literally brought us face to face with the saint. One was not sure which was more delectable - his expansiveness, moving music or sparkling presentation laced with delicate wit. One came away with the impression that the man and his music were the products of the distillation of years of careful study and analysis.

A concert by this great scholar was very educative - from no one else could a rasika come across rare pieces in Gurjari, Narayanagowla, Padi ragas or a rare varnam of Ramaswami Sivan, or

Dikshitar's creations in English notes, or Syama Sastry's rare kritis, or even the rarely heard Utsava Sampradaya Kritis of Tyagaraja like "Chelimini" (Yedukula-khamboji) or Rama Natakam kritis. It was a very broad spectrum with bright bands of musical colours. Of course, with all his simplicity of style, to appreciate his musical stature fully, the rasika needed a broad background of appreciation and musical culture.

Racine said that "Honour without money was a mere malady". Dr. Ramanathan received high honours - Fellowship of Sangit Nataka Akademy, "Sangita Kalanidhi" from the Music Academy Madras, "Isai Perarignar" from Tami Sangam, "Kalaimamani" etc. He was the Principal of the Madurai Sadguru Sangeetha Samajam. He was an examiner in music at the Universities of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu etc. He was the first invitee to any seminar on music held anywhere in India. But none of these honours or assignments made him affluent enough to conserve his energy for taking up actual projects for widening the horizons of the art and science of music. In any other country, a musician-cum-musicologist of his stamp would have occupied a chair in an university and lent distinction to it. That, alas, was not to be. The struggle for sheer existence sapped his energies. His modesty and self-respect were too exceptional, for him to stoop and conquer so as to amass riches.

It only remains to record what a great loss his death is to "Shanmukha". He was really one of its pillars. Ever ready to oblige the Editor with an article at any time, his advice and counsel were invaluable assets to the Journal. On thing is for sure: not only is he irreplaceable, but even decades may not see another colossus like him emerge.

Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer Centenary

The India International Rural Cultural Centre (IIRCC), of which the Chief Justice of India is the President, is a non-official body whose main objective is to promote, propagate cultural activities of a classical nature at the rural level. The IIRCC is now nine years old. By promoting inter-State cultural activities on a voluntary basis this body has been promoting national integration also. Mr. V. V. Verma is the Secretary.

The IIRCC has hit upon the superb idea of celebrating the Birth Centenary Celebrations of that great Vainika, Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer, at Madras, Bangalore New Delhi and Lucknow this year. On 26th March '88, Shri P. C. Alexander, the Governor of Madras, inaugurated the celebrations held at the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall of the Music Academy. Shri S. Viswanathan of Enfield group presided. The Governor made a powerful speech in which he deplored the total neglect of our arts during the British occupation of India and stressed the strong revival now taking place both abroad and in India. In his presidential address, Shri Viswanathan aptly summarised Sambasiva Iyer's unique contribution to Vina culture.

An interesting programme of discussion and demonstration was arranged, in

which Shri T.S. Parthasarthy, Dr. K. S. Subramanian (adopted son of Sri Sambasiva Iyer), Messrs. N. R. Bhuvarahan (Art critic of "Hindu") Dr. S. Seetha, and S. Rajam played conspicuous roles. Dr. Subramanian gave a brilliant lecture on the "Stylistic aspects of the Karaikudi School of Vina". It was made memorable by practical demonstration on the Vina, in which fingering techniques, role of practice lessons, use of gamakas etc. stood out. There was no shortage of anecdotes either with both Sri K. Chandrasekharan and Sri K. Sankara Menon of Kalakshetra, unleashing a flood of memories of the great maestro. The house went into peals of laughter as the two venerable gentlemen gave instances of Sambasiva Iyer's inflexible adherence to principles and code of conduct, bordering on eccentricity.

Sambasiva Iyer's mastery of artistic expression—fluid, sensitive, classical, demanding an appreciation of minute subtleties, organised yet spontaneous display; concentrating his skills into clearly defined corridors; synthesising of art and craft on a high level of achievement—his scorn for mundane values; and his intense dedication, are all part of our cultural history now. Many, many years ago "SHANMUKHA" presented a true yet colourful picture of his attitudes and attainments in an article by N.R.B. This was reproduced in the beautiful Number produced and presented on this occasion by Sri M. S. Venkataraman (Enfield) whose zeal in organising the celebration was exemplary. May the celebrations at other centres, especially in the North, be equally successful!

Narada Gana Sabha Trust

The Madras Narada Gana Sabha Trust's Auditorium and building complex were

inaugurated on 14th February 1988 by the saintly Swami Haridhos Giri at a function distinguished by a chanting of bhajans in which hundreds joined in a chorus that must have floated up to the very heavens. The auditorium is named after the great sage of Tapovanam, Swamiji Gnananda. "A work of art implies a harmony of every thing together" (*une harmonie ensemble*) wrote Henry Matisse in his work "The meaning of Art". The Hall is beautiful in every way and is the spontaneous product of emerging sensibilities—artistic, acoustical and well-appointed. It is in short a symbol of the unity of focal vision of Sri S. Krishnaswami, the President, and his hard-working colleagues over the years. A three-week music, drama and dance festival, featuring top-rankers like Semmangudi, KVN, DKJ, Lalgudi, TVS, Mandolin Srinivas, Padma Subramanyam, Chitra Viswesvaran, Kathadi, Manohar, was held with fine results. The Gnanananda Hall is a welcome addition to the auditoria facilities of South Madras.

Saraswathi Vaggeyakara Trust

A pioneer in Madras in the matter of celebrating the birthdays of important composers and trend-setter in many innovative and laudable ventures, "Saraswathi" formed the above Trust in September 1987. Its objects are to promote research in compositions, popularise the output of vaggeyakaras and build up a suitable Library. With Sri N.V. Subramaniam guiding it, one may expect the Trust to swing into action soon.

Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust-Third Anniversary Celebrations

Shri M. V. Arunachalam, Chairman, Murugappa Electronics Ltd., inaugurated

the third anniversary celebrations of the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust in a speech that recalled the glorious services rendered by the Nagarathar Community of Chettinad in promoting music and dance and in honouring the great maestros. As Dr. Semmangudi pertinently remarked on this occasion, the patronage, respect and kind treatment musicians and dancers received from them in the era 1900-1950 A.D. was mainly responsible for the emergence of giants like Puchhi Iyengar, Musiri Subramania Iyer, Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar and many others who touched the peak of their careers.

Sri S. Viswanathan, Chairman of Enfield group, presided and spoke warmly about the ungrudging assistance given by the Trust to the discovery and uplifting of talented boys and girls.

A feature of the celebrations was the honouring of Dr. M. L. Vasanthakumari with a cash award of Rs. 5,000/- and shawl etc; also of Vidwans R. K. Venkatarama Sastry, Tanjore Sankara Iyer, T. Mukta, Nagore Ambi Iyer' mridangam. Encomiums were paid to the great services rendered to Carnatic music by all these musicians for over 50 years. Dr. M. L. Vasanthakumari thanked the Maharajapuram Trust for its gracious gesture to musicians. One and all present had nothing but unqualified praise for Maharajapuram Santhanam for his generous and thoughtful schemes of assistance in the cause of music. The function was followed by a brilliant recital by Dr. MLV the same evening. A week-long series of concerts by eminent artists are also to be held.

Tyagarajaswami Trust, Tirupati

The Tyagarajaswami Trust of Tirupati has arranged at Tirupati an excellent week of concerts, lectures, dance, demonstrations from 7th April to 16th April 88. This 42nd Annual Festival will be inaugurated by Shri D. Sitaramiah Garu, Chairman, TTD Board of Trustess on 7/4/88, while the Sadas will be held on 10-4-88 when Padmasri Lalgudi Jayaraman will be honoured with the title of "Sapthagiri Sangeeta Vidwan Mani" by Sri T. T. Vasu. The choice of the title is as appropriate as the choice of the recipient for that great honour. Shri C. V. Narasimhan, former U.N. Under-Secretary-General, presided over the function. "Shanmukha" offers its hearty compliments to Messrs K.V. Subramaniam and M. Krishaswami, Chairman and Secretary of the Tyagarajaswami Trust, for planning this Festival so well.

K. Sivaraman Honoured

Congratulations to Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman, the eminent mridangam artist, on the honour of 'Padma Sri' conferred on him by the Central Government. An honour richly deserved.



Shri C. V. Narasimhan.

Shri C. V. Narasimhan has kindly agreed to be a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of this Journal. We are thankful to him for this gracious gesture. His deep commitment to classical Carnatic music and his dedication to the growth of the art would be of invaluable support to this journal.

"Shanmukha"

"SHANMUKHA" was born in April 1975. All that an Editor can say is: how worth-while has this adventure been to the organisers of the Sabha on the one hand and the readership and advertisers, on the other! We offer humble thanks to the benevolent Providence that has blessed this effort with success.

Errata In the April issue, among the list of artists receiving the Sangita Natak Akademy's Awards, the names of Dr. T. Viswanathan (Flute) of Wesleyan University and Smt. Sudharani Raghupathy (noted Danseuse) were left out. The oversight is regretted.

K. S. M.

The Music of Venkataramana Bhagavathar (1781-1784)

By

Smt. Malathi Janardhanan, Lecturer, College of Music, Music Academy, Madras

Tanjore had the good fortune of being ruled by the Chola Kings who were genuine patrons of music and dance. One purohit Sri Kuppiah, a Sourashtra brahmin from Dadeesi gotram, lived in Ariyalur of Trichy district around 18th Century. He was well versed in Sanskrit and jothisha sastra. Later he shifted to Ayyampettai, a small village in Tanjore District, which was known as Ramachandrapuram.

He found many of the Sourastrians living in this village to be good performing artists in Carnatic Music. He prayed to Lord Venkatachalapathi for a grandson who would become a famous musician. His prayers to Lord Viswanatha and sage Vyasa were granted. On Sunday, 18th February 1981 on Mahabahula dasami, under Mulam star, a male child was born to Nannusamy, Kuppiah's son. Kuppiah knew this grandson to be the amsas of Lord Vigneswara and Vyasa, and named him as Venkataramana.

Meeting with the Guru

Venkataramana studied many languages like Sourashtra, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. He had his early training in music from his father Nannusamy himself. He used to go to Thiruvaiyar daily and used to listen quietly to saint Tyagataia giving music lessons to his pupils. He had a great desire to learn directly from Sri Tyagaraja. One day Venkataramana introduced himself to Saint Tyagaraja and expressed his desire to learn music from him. Tyagaraja whole heartedly welcomed him as his sishya. In the years to follow, Venkataramana was to become his prime disciple also.

Guru orders in his Dream

Bhagavathar was waiting for the prompting from his guru to start composing his own kritis. One night, Sadguru appeared in his dream and directed him to compose songs in praise of Lord Krishna. Bhagavathar's first kriti after this incident is in praise of his guru, starting with the phrase 'Guruvaru Mahimala'. In the first charana itself he refers to his dream as follows.

NINNAREYINA SVPNAMU NANDANA PANNUKA VENGESI
MANNANA TODA MADHAVU PARAMUGA
KONNIKRITULU JATA KURSUMANINASRI

Marriage

Bhagavathar did not marry till his 41st year. His parents were much worried. Finally, again with the order and permission of his guru, he married Muthulakshmi Ammal. Two years later, he got a son named Krishnaswami who later became a Kin-nari player and who, too, became a disciple of Saint Tyagaraja. Later he became a Vaggeyakara composing many varnams and pallavis.

Bhagavatar's second son was Ramaswami Bhagavatar.

Bhagavatar and bhajana Mantra in Walajahpet

About 110 years back Walajahpet Ghanam Palli Narayana Swami Chettiyar and a few other rich Sourashtrian merchants bought a house at No : 21 Rajivi Street in Walajahpet and presented the same to Sri Venkataramana Bhagavatar for conducting Bhagavata puja and bhajana. And thereafter, Venkataramana Bhagavatar settled there and conducted daily puja to the idols of Sri Rama, Rukmini Satyabhama Samedha Sri Prasanna Rajagopala Swami - their family deity, as also to his guru.

Later years

Sri Tyagaraja attained moksha in Tiruvaiyaru on Pushya Bhahulapanchami day Krishnaswami Bhagavatar (Venkataramana's first son) was present with his guru during the latter's last moments. Some people had a vision of a Jothi uniting with Sri Rama's idol and some others saw the Jothi proceeding towards the north. Later Tyagaraja appeared in a dream to Venkataramana Bhagavatar and conveyed him the message of his attaining moksha that day and also that his Atman was on holy journey to Srirangam, Tirupati, Bhadrachalan, Kasi, Puri Jagannath, Kanchipuram and Chidambaram before its attaining 'Siddhi' on Ekadasi day. He ordered Venkataramana Bhagavatar to perform Gurupuja on Ekadasi day only. Bhagavatar respected the wishes of his guru in a devoted and befitting way.

His Compositions

Venkataramana Bhagavatar had his gurukulavasa for a period of 26 years. Apart from his Ishta deiva 'Krishna', he had also composed kritis in praise of Lord Ganapathi, Venkatachalapathi and Sri Rama. In addition, his compositions 'Gurucharanam' in Sankarabharana, "Guruvaru mahimala" in Anandabhairavi and "Vadarasane" in Purvikalyani are in praise of his Guru. He had also composed Sri Guru Sthotrashtakam, Seesa padyam and Sri Guru Mangalashtakam. He has contributed many kirtanas for Bhajana Sampradaya. "Sri Kanchi Rama Brahmaswami Vali Charitra Seesapadya" is also his own creation. In all, it is said that he has composed about 2,500 kritis. Notation is available for only a few pieces, His kritis are after his guru in style. He had also followed Sri Syama Sastri in composing Swarajatis. Swarajatis in Kambhoj Kedaragowla, Hari Kambhoji and Bhairavi are popularly sung. His Swarajatis and Varnams are adorned with swaraksharas and beautiful permutation and combination of svaras.

He has composed ten varnas in Mukhari, Devamanohari, Chakravakam, Kedaram, Hamsadvani, Kamalamanohari, Sri, Kalyani and Abhogi ragas. 'Karuna payonidhi' in Mukhari raga is in Ata Tala. The varnam in Hamsadvani has a beautiful Mukthayisvara with sahitya where we can find many swaraksharas. Mukthayisvara is as follows :

Gr-p gr-pp gr-np gr-ng | Rr-p n pr-n | gr-pg np-sr ||

Va ri ja mukha bhava Sakhamuni sukhapari | pa la da nu ja ku la Ja la da pa va na khan

Gpg pn-rg p-n sr gpn-g | pg-n, p sn | r-n srs; ||

Va ri dhi ma da ha ra na da sa ra ta su ta na ra va ta ra ni ra Va dhi Suka da

np s n r - p n p - r r gr-n | gr - n s r gr-p | gr - n gr r r g ||

va ri ja bha va ja na ka da ya ka ra nir ma la nee ra da va ra nibha nikhi la dhi pa ||

s r n r - n p n p n - g p g n p | r n p s p g | n p g r n s r ||

Ta ra ma ra hru da ya va ra ma la ka ma la su bringa su banga patlan ga su ta nu ta (Sri)

As he had lived during British times, we can also trace Western influence in the last charana of the Chakravaka raga varnam 'Nenarunchi'. The last charana goes as follows.

S r R G r S N S D n p d | N S D n p d | m p g m P r g ||

m P p G r - G m P m p d n | S n N d p d | m p d n S p d ||

P d n D n S N S r s n s | r G m g r S n | d p m p d n s

p P S S g g m g r s N d | p m p d n s s | p P r g m p d ||

(Sruta)

Here we can find the Samvaditva among svara patterns.

Vina Kuppiar and Venkataramana Bhagavatar in a combined effort have composed a Tana Varna in Bhairavi Raga. This piece has a special feature of both Dhatu and Matu woven in Anuloma and Viloma patterns.

Bhairavi - Adi Tala

Pallavi :—

SARASAKURA KU SARASA

VA RA MA NA NU NAMARAVA

Anupallavi :—

PARAVELE DULEVERAPA

NARAVA MA NU MAVARA NA

(Mukthayi Svava follows)

Charana :—

RAJIVA NAYANA VAJI RA

(Svaras follow five numbers)

He has composed many kritis in Anandabhairabi, Punnavarali, Bhairavi, Sankarabharanam and Kedaragowla. He has also composed kritis in rare ragas like Namanarayani, Jyothi Svaroopini, Natanavelavali, and Vijayanagari.

Characteristics of kritis

All his compositions have easy diction. He believed in prose order rather than poetic form while composing. He strictly handled only the devotional theme. Raga, Tala, and Bhava are inter-related in all his compositions. (eg, 'Raravasudeva' — Todi — Rupakam). The words 'Ramachandrapura' and 'Ramadasa' are used in all his compositions. Compositions in Bhairavi raga are tuned in such a way that they set a model for Tana Singing e.g., 'Rara dasarata' — Rupakam.

Like his guru, he was an expert in introducing allusions in his kritis — 'Paravasa-mayenura' — Nadanamakriya — Adi. In this kriti the Bhagavata quotes from two well-founded stories of Bhagavatam and one characterisation of Lakshmana and Bharata from Ramayana. In the first charana, he quotes from the famous story of Ajamila whom the Lord Narayana's messengers save from the noose of yama kinkaras just because he uttered the word 'Narayana' even though he was only calling his son whose name was also Narayana. Ajamila, who led a wretched life, thus became sanctified by the mere utterance of Lord Mahavishnu's glorious name.

In the second charana, the story of Prahlada is illustrated concisely where Druva attains salvation by meditating on Srimad Narayana.

The reference to Valmiki's characterisation of Lakshmana and Bharata is in the third charana where their unique brotherly affection and devotion to Lord Sri Rama is brought out subtly and beautifully.

From these three pieces, we see the devotional fervour mood of the Bhagavata and his profound love for Sri Rama (Lord Vishnu on the whole) reflected in his kritis.

Apart from all these, he has also composed 'Potana Bhagavatam' and presented it on the occasion of the Shashtiapurthi of his guru.

A meticulous sishya

While he was a disciple of Sri Tyagaraja, he used to sit by his side and watch keenly his guru's songs. He used to notate those songs at once. The magnificent effort to record the songs in correct notation has made possible the survival of many rare pieces of Sri Tyagaraja in their correct setting and composition. Thus has Venkataramana Bhagavata carved an immortal place for himself in Carnatic musical history. In many senses, he was the foremost sishya of the saint and commands our spontaneous reverence.

Tyagaraja & Musicology

PART II

Speaking on the origin of music, Purandara and Tyagaraja attributed music to be derived from Samaveda. Tyagaraja called Rama as "Vedasiromatrja saptasvara nadacala dipa", Purandara simply saluted as "Samaveda namo". The God Siva is said to have produced all the seven notes from his heads and other parts of his body *vide* the charana of 'Nadatanumanisam "Sadyojatadi.....". The realisation of 'Saptasvaras' within ourselves would amount to the realisation of the Supreme within ourselves: In a different way, Tyagaraja explained in the Kriti "Svararagasudharasa". He has brought in the Advaita philosophy in his exposition of the principles of musicology. This may seem strange on his part as he was mainly a visishtadvaiti but we must remember that Tiruvaiyaru was the seat of a strong Advaita culture then.

An Art & Science

Tyagaraja further distinguishes "Sangita Jnana" and "Sangita Sastra Jnana". He made compositions separately to signify the contrast between the two. The kirtanas are 'Sangita Jnanamu' and "Sangita Sastra Jnanamu", "Sarupya Soukhyadame Manasa", which is in Dhanyasi and Mukhari respectively. In these compositions, his awareness of the twin characteristics of music viz., as an art and science is indicated. He expects every musician to have such talents.

Incidentally Tyagaraja has made several suggestions to musicians in order to

prosper in their profession. He mocks at musicians who lack proper knowledge of the science of music but pose themselves as great musicians, in the kirtana "Varagalayajnulu tamanucu Vadareraya" in Chenchukambhoji raga. The telugu word 'Vadareraya' is significant. In its anupallavi and charana he says:

"Svarajati murchana bhedamul
Seantamandu teliyaka yundina
Dehodbhavamabagu nadamul
divyamou prana vakkaramane
dahamberugani manavul
Tyagarajanuta, Yeceru Rama"

The kriti contains the technical terms viz. Raga laya, Svara, Jati, Murchana, Bheda etc with which musicians should be well acquainted while singing. Further, this kriti is full of criticism against musicians who are proud of their art but are not giving proper attention to the science of music.

Sangatis

The kriti form and its sections is sought to be perfected by Tyagaraja through the technique of "Sangatis". Due to this also, he can be rightly called as "Tyagabrahma". When we talk about the structure or type of "Sangatis" viz., Ragabhava Sangatis and Sahitya Bhava Sangatis, we will have to draw largely from his compositions only. For example, the kriti "Chakkani Rajamargamu" in Kharaharapriya raga highlights the sangatis pertaining to Raga bhava, whereas in the kriti "Rama nannu brovara" (Harikambhoji), the sangatis highlight Sahitya bhava.

Tyagaraja has defined the kriti form in the kriti 'Sogasuga mridanga talamu' in Sriranjani raga. This is seen from the expression 'Yati Visrama Sadbhaktiyu rati draksharasa navarasayuta kriti.' He indicates further that composing kritis which would be pleasing to God is not easy. He hints also that a special knack (Yukti) is also necessary to compose kritis.

The saint has composed kirtanas in many rare ragas. He has also created some new ragas and called them as "Vinta Ragas". The shape and bhava of those new and rare raga emerges from his compositions clearly.

In ancient days there were source-books on music, like 'Vyasakataka', 'Narada Kataka' and 'Hanumat Kataka' etc., which were apparently helpful in shedding light on rare ragas. As those sources are not available to us now, Tyagaraja's compositions are a source of good guidance.

The famous "Pancaratra Kirtanas" may be noted as examples of certain rare combinations of svara passages, ancient alankaras, varnas etc. Though Tyagaraja did not mention the "ancient alankaras" and "varnas" in particular, he did introduce such patterns in his kirtanas. Each one of the five is undoubtedly a priceless treasure.

In the pancaratnas in Nata and Goula ragas, the dhatu set-up is magnificent. The Dhatu 'Jante' type of svara-sets and the ancient alankaras are well illustrated in addition. The sahitya part of the kirtana "Dudukugala" signifies the various shortcomings and lapses of people in general

and musicians in particular. The pancaratna kriti in Arabhi "Sadhinchene" resembles the musical form 'padavarna' with an 'anubandha' at the end. The pancaratna in Sri raga contains an enumeration of the principles and the requisites for a good musician. According to him, all good musicians are 'Nija Bhagavatas' and 'dasas' dedicated to the feet of God. Wherever he refers to the principles of music or requisites of a musician, he has in mind a musician-devotee only. The pancaratna kirtana in Varali raga is a superb example of the way in which the raga could be elaborated. There is also ample scope to know all about the raga rasa theory in the compositions of Tyagaraja.

In the Kriti 'Endaro Mahanubhavulu' the bard has indicated certain important requisites for a musician. The real musicians are those who portray the excellences of God and experience happiness ("nimenu gunabhajunamanda kirtanam Seyuvaru") and who perform with a fair knowledge of 'Svara', 'Laya', 'Raga' etc., (PatitapavanaSvara Layadi ragamulu teliyuvuru").

Tyagaraja did not consider it beneath his dignity to stress the rudimentary norms of music. For example, he has mentioned the sitting posture, the way of holding the tambura and the use of tambura as a drone. He has indicated that one has to sit for music practice in the early hours of the morning, after resisting overpowering sleep. At one place he says 'Niddura Nirakarincu mudduga tambura batti, suddha maina manasuto susvaramuto' and at another place 'Vekuvajamuna Velayvcu tumbura batti'. etc.

Tyagaraja has also indirectly indicated the two modes of sangita viz., Marga and Desi. 'Marga' Sangita is the way shown and practised by Gods themselves i.e. mythological approach of music, whereas 'Desi' sangita is sung by human beings on the basis of the saptasvaras emanating from our own body itself. For Marga sangita, he gave the clue that the saptasvaras emanate from the five faces of Siva himself and audible to the Gods only. The sapta svaras produced by the combination of 'prana' and 'anala' in the human body can come out through the five parts of the human

body. These are the sources for the Desi sangita karas.

In this manner, a great number of theoretical points on music have been covered. Having established the importance of music even in that aspect, Tyagaraja has indicated the various benefits of music. Music promises prosperity here and hereafter. All musicians are immensely indebted to Tyagaraja, because their prosperity is due to what this great Vaggeyakara has done in the field of music and musicology. (Concluded).

Dr. T. SEETHARAMALAKSHMI
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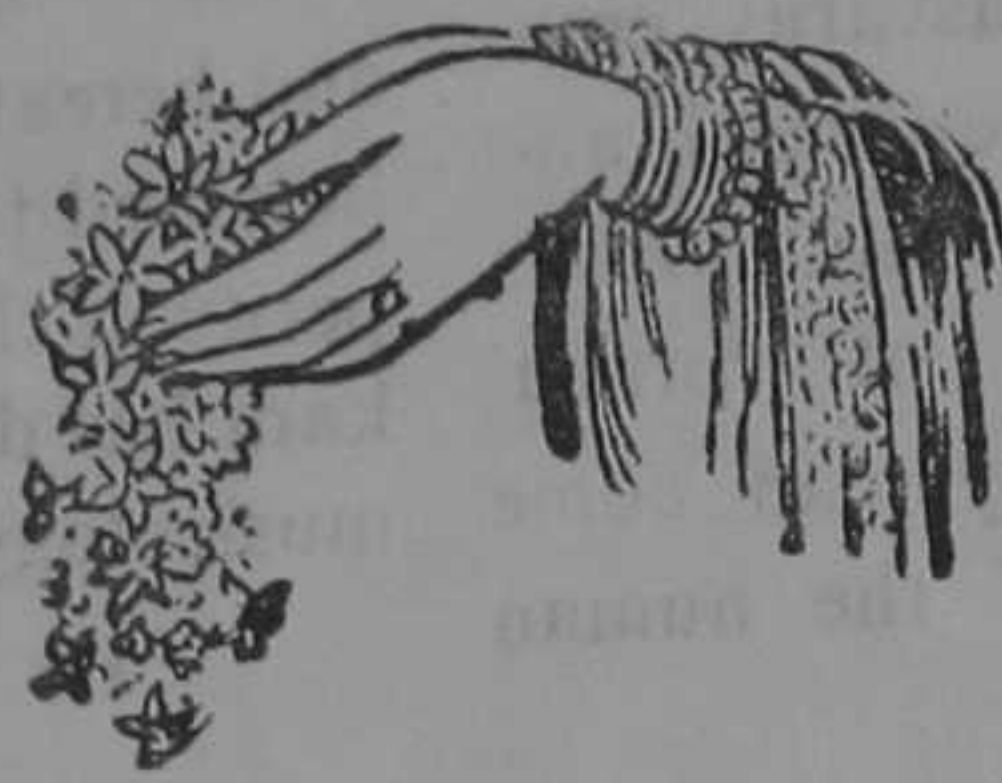
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Laser Spectroscopy and Basic Aspects of Indian Music

By

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INTRODUCTION :

Indian music, both Carnatic and Hindustani styles, possess two distinct basic features which are responsible for its complex melody and its aesthetics : a) use of quartertones as seen in the division of an octave into 22 unequal intervals or srutis, b) gamakas or a great many varieties of embellishments of notes (svaras). Despite great deal of discussions and writings from times past to present by eminent musicians and musicologists, we as yet do not have precise information on the position of svaras as well as on the shape of svaras played with gamaka in the elaboration of raga. In the words of the music genius Mali, the celebrated flutist, such information is of vital importance for both theory and practice of music.

Music, like photography, is both an art as well as science. While the relation between music and mathematics is often expressed, I wish to stress the obvious fact that music is a branch of physics i.e. acoustics. Hence it will not be surprising that recent developments in Laser physics can play a useful role in understanding the basic aspects of Indian music. In this paper I wish to describe the possible utility of the recently developed Doppler shift free laser spectroscopy and outline a possible experimental arrangement which can provide us with very useful information

regarding svaras when played or sung with or without gamakas since it is possible to measure very accurately frequencies by this method to an amazing and unimaginable precision i.e. within one part in 10^{15} .

2. Basic aspects of Indian music-Carnatic and Hindustani styles.

The most distinguishing feature of classical Indian music is the use of quartertones. A general consensus prevails that there are 22 srutis within an octave. In other words the octave in Indian music contains in addition to the twelve notes of the universal diatonic scale further ten notes. It is also agreed that a few other notes apart from these are also used in some ragas. Late Professor Sambamurthy, the eminent musicologist has opined that a well trained ear can perceive in Indian music at least 50 notes in an octave. The existence of 22 or more srutis in an octave is an interesting area of the scientific aspects of Indian music.

Another characteristic feature of the melody of the ragas is the impression of continuity arising from gamakas or a great many varieties of embellishments of a note or svara. In fact the aesthetic appeal of the ragas rests mainly on these gamakas. Parsvadeva provides a neat definition of gamakas as follows (see Ref. 1): "When

a note produces the colour of srutis other than those which are its own, it is known as gamaka". Gamakas can be broadly divided into two heads: (i) Rava (vibrato) type, (ii) Jaru (glide or continuous type); gamakas having both characteristics are also in vogue. Some gamakas are peculiar to vocal music and some are possible only in instruments like Vina, Violin, Flute, etc. The melody of Indian music acquires its complex nature and captivating allure from the use of gamakas in contrast to Western music which relies on harmony, a feature absent in Indian music. It is said that music without gamaka is like a flower without its fragrance. Indeed the essential difference between the rendering of a given musical idea or form by a brilliant creative musician arises mainly due to the ability of the former in producing the appropriate gamakas.

In short gamakas refer comprehensively to any type of manipulation of a note resulting in a musical effect which is acceptable as preserving the integrity (artistic) of a raga. Over the centuries, several creative musical minds have sought to define the different gamakas. Some of the gamakas are alike in essentials but seem to differ in details like range (frequency), extent of shake (amplitude), magnitude, speed (tempo) and duration. The present consensus is that there exist ten gamakas. (See Ref. 1 for their description).

The use of quartertones along with gamakas of various kinds is mainly responsible for the abundantly rich variety of innumerable scales or ragas in Indian music. It is the common practice to characterize a raga by the srutis or svaras which are employed to bring out the specific

melodic form of the raga. As is well recognised, this characterization is not adequate since svara somehow sounds slightly different in each raga. The real reason for this intriguing aspect is the role of gamakas in creating the individuality of the raga i.e. ragachaya. Ragas with identical svaras in the ascent (arohana) and in the descent (avarohana) can be sung to sound differently from each other by means of gamakas present in one and absent in the other. It is also perhaps the reason behind the difference that exists between different schools of music (gharana, or style or Bhani). It is well to remember that the same type of gamaka occurs with different degrees of intensity, rapidity and raga in different ragas. As of now there is no satisfactory notation which can indicate the gamakas associated with a svara occurring in a raga. Since any svara when sung or played is always accompanied by its harmonics, it is my guess that a proper scientific investigation will reveal that a svara along with its harmonics may also play a vital role in determining the type of gamakas which can occur in a given raga. To sum up, raga is a dynamical musical form and it is only natural that we are not able to characterize it in terms of static quantities like position of svaras etc.

The statements and remarks above are sufficient to convince anyone the paramount need to perform experiments to determine the frequencies of a note when sung or played with and without gamaka. Several years ago the music genius, T.R. Mahalingam (Mali), the celebrated flutist observed in a letter to the Mail, the evening English daily in Madras (no longer published) that in Carnatic music there does not exist uniformity in the position of svaras even when

played or sung without any gamaka. In his opinion, different musicians, vocalists and instrumentalists, produce a given note in various positions in a narrow range of frequency interval due to practice. In that letter Mali has emphasized the need for a consensus among the musicians concerning the position of svaras—the position of svaras at least when played without gamaka for both theory and practice of music. As late Sambamoorthy writes "when a suitable apparatus is devised which will indicate the frequencies of note played, then we can experimentally prove the values of srutis." He was referring to the problem of 22 srutis in an octave. The need is more when gamakas have to be understood.

3. Doppler Shift Free Laser Spectroscopy.

Lasers refer to devices which produce electromagnetic radiation in various frequency range starting from microwave, infrared, visible, ultraviolet etc. in such a manner that the emitted radiation is very intense, highly directional and coherent in contrast to the usual sources where these properties are absent. Actually Laser is an acronym standing for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. The basic principle of lasers is due to Einstein. Atoms, molecules etc. emit radiation when there is a transition from one energy level E_1 to another energy level E_2 . According to the laws of quantum mechanics, the difference in energy is related to the frequency of the emitted radiation as enunciated by Niels Bohr: Because of the intrinsic probabilistic nature of the laws of the microworld, the emitted radiation is not coherent i.e. it is emitted in a frequency interval centred around ν . The

energy levels are not sharp but have a width.

It was Einstein who developed the concept of stimulated emission where one increases the population in E_1 which then reaches E_2 by emitting radiation with frequency ν . Now it is possible to make lasers for a wide range of frequencies from microwave through infrared and visible upto the ultra-violet region of the electromagnetic spectrum and beyond. Lasers based on organic dyes can be turned continuously across the visible spectrum in contrast to the earlier lasers which operated on a single frequency. Usually the frequency of a laser light is stable to within one part in 10^8 . Currently lasers with a frequency stability approaching one part in 10^{14} are being built. A well defined laser beam has three important characteristics i) high degree of mono-chromaticity ii) directionality iii) high intensity. These features of a laser beam are enabling physicists to undertake scientific investigations that would have been unimaginable previously. When the lasers were invented, in popular accounts, it is common to refer to laser as a solution looking for a problem. Nobel prize winner and the famous laser physicist from U.S.A. Prof. A.L. Schawlow has remarked that the existence of lasers has not provided solutions to all our problems but they have given us a good hint as to where the solutions to problems involving determination of frequencies can be found (see Ref. 2).

In the early 1970's Hansch at Stanford and Borde in Paris have developed independently a method to eliminate the ever-present Doppler shift in the frequency of emitted radiation. Doppler shift that

refers to the change in frequency of light or sound caused by the relative motion between the source and the observer. The frequency increases (decreases) when the source moves towards (away from) the observer, the magnitude of the frequency change depending upon the orientation of the velocity. For the type of accuracy in the determination of frequencies, it is important to eliminate the Doppler shift. The method due to Hansch and Borde' called the Doppler shift free Laser spectroscopy can measure frequencies to an hitherto unimaginable extraordinary accuracy i.e., within one part in 10^{17} . The method is based on the arrangement in which two beams of same frequency travel in opposite directions and hence experience Doppler shifts in opposite directions. The beams travel through a sample cell containing the physical system whose properties we wish to study (see reference 2 and the references therein).

4. Laser Spectroscopy and Aesthetic basic of Indian music.

From the section 3, it is patiently clear that laser spectroscopic method is tailor-made to carry out investigation of both the static (position) and the dynamic (gamaka aspect) properties of svaras in a raga. Such an investigation will also be helpful in understanding the particular characteristics of vocal and instrumental music. A cherished ideal of Indian music is the production of music from instruments very similar to that of vocalist (Gayaki style).

We need two lasers, one operating on a single frequency and another which can be continuously tuned. The laser beam from the first can be made to undergo frequency modulation by means of music suitably converted as an optical signal

through an electrooptic conversion arrangement. The resulting modulated laser beam can be probed by the laser beam from the second laser by tuning. The result of the interaction between the two beams can be best analysed with the help of a small computer suitably programmed and with the help of a Fourier analyser.

The arrangement described above is clearly feasible and is eminently suited for our purpose. The various requirements regarding the experimental arrangement such as frequency of lasers etc., are being worked out in collaboration with Professor R. Srinivasan, Department of X-ray Crystallography and Molecular Physics University of Madras.

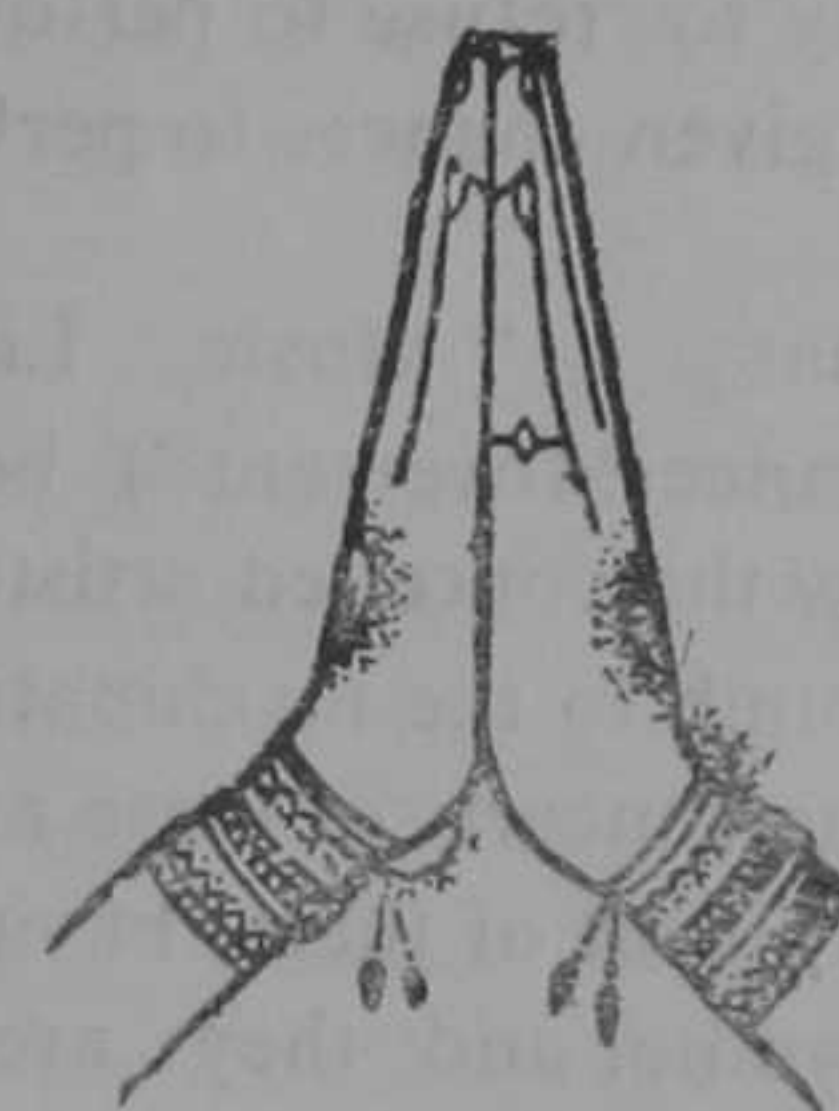
Acknowledgement.

I wish to thank Professor P. Hariharan, C.S.I.R.O., Sydney, Australia, for interesting discussion regarding the feasibility of the experiment as well as for his encouragement. I also wish to acknowledge that the idea of the present experiment occurred to me when I heard Professor G.W. Series delivering a seminar on Laser Spectroscopy in February 1982 in the University of Singapore which made me aware of the Doppler Shift free laser spectroscopy.

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See also C.S. Iyer ; The Grammar of South Indian Music 3rd Edition (1976).
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See also references listed therein.
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,
I have been wanting to write to your journal for long on a delicate subject but, for fear of disturbing the proverbial hornet's nest, I refrained from doing so till now. But circumstances have forced me to write this letter.

The quality and content of the present day music concerts are so appallingly low as not to attract knowledgeable listeners. The so-called "top artists", now well past their prime, (whose musical prowess is clearly on the wane) have made themselves "inaccessable" to the lower ranks of music lovers, because of the fantastically high rates they demand for their 'wares'. The average Sabhas simply cannot afford to pay them and thus, the ordinary rasikas hardly have any opportunity of hearing them. Even if such small sabhas manage to scrape enough funds from here and there once in years, some artists have the temerity to refuse to perform in those Sabhas unless and until their sons/daughters are also given chances to perform.

It is, perhaps, high time that a "Music Listeners' Resistance Movement" (similar to the "Consumer Resistance Movement") be started by a person of eminence in the music world in order to show the conceited artistes their places, as also to arraign the big Sabhas who appear to succumb to the machinations of the top artistes, much to the chagrin of smaller sabhas. The concerts of these artistes in the "Big Sabhas" have become purely elitist entertainment, most of them having little knowledge of music. They attend concerts as a status symbol and they are often found hovering around the canteen than in the concert hall. Perhaps, we of the older generation, have heard the best music in the 'thirties and' forties and may have lost the capacity or patience to tolerate mediocrity. But we are really concerned about the future of this great art.

Another baneful trend is the mushrooming of fragmentary Sabhas in the name of encouraging young talent (and not so young too) whose ulterior motive is to boost the half-baked wards of its members or those of their friends. The quality of their performance is ludicrous.

There is an yawning and abysmal gap between the standards of excellence of the old stalwarts and the sham music of the younger generation. This state of affairs will, and can, be rectified only if the top artistes condescend to give several "free" performances in various Hindu festivals, deserving Sabhas and thereby giving opportunities to the budding artistes to hear them and to the younger generation to learn. But the question is, Will they? They are not so magnanimous as the old guard who knew the value of music as much as money and saved both.

Yours sincerely
NESTOR*

* This *nom-de-plume* is that of a veteran rasika who is President of a Sabha in Bombay and whose forebears rendered yeoman service to music in the great past—Ed.

The Future of Bharata Natyam is Immense

By

Prof. A. N. Parasuram, M.A.

Let me at the outset give an account of the origin and development of Bharata's Natya Sastra and how it is all comprehensive and carries within itself the seeds of development and expansion. This Sastra, in its own way, is a product of the same Indian genius which produced the Brahma Sutras and the monumental work on Sanskrit Grammar by Panini. This Natya Sastra deals with the structure of human consciousness, its tap root emotions and the ways in which they manifest themselves in the various parts of the human body and how they affect the very inner core of our being. The Sastra also deals with the construction of the theatre, the types of musical instruments to be used, the type of voice suitable to the singer dealing with either tender emotions or overpowering passions. The dress and the other aharyas suitable to each type are also indicated.

The qualifications necessary for a student to learn Bharata Natya, the accomplishments of a teacher, the aptitude and competence of the spectators are also enumerated. The actors or the performers are also instructed in the art of judging the success of their performance from the reactions of the audience and from their own inner satisfactions. All these topics are dealt with in the course of 5,000 verses divided into 36 chapters.

The date of composition of this immortal work has been estimated from 600 B.C. to 200 A.D. There are some Pre-Paninian

usages, and some verses which read better as Vedic Chhandas rather than as metres of classical Sanskrit. The Sastra reveals that it is a crystallisation of meditations and discussions of various writers from the time of the Ithihasas. The Sastra goes on to say that Brahma, the Creator, composed the Natya Sastra, taking its various parts like the excellent language from the Rig Veda, music from the Sama Veda, the theatrical business from the Yajur Veda, and the rasas from the Atharva Veda and the remaining parts from the Vedangas.

The first two dramas composed and acted by the Rishis are : (1) Tripuradahana and (2) Amritamathana, churning of the ocean for nectar. Lord Parameswara who witnessed it complimented the author and congratulated the actors. He said that justice had been done to all the parts and every type of character depicted. He went on to add that the plays could be made more attractive if some dance items made up of 'Karanas' and a combination of 'Karanas' called "Angaharas" could also be introduced.

Brahma replied that he was ignorant of the items mentioned, and the Rishis remarked that they did not know how to dance gracefully. Parameswara graciously got 'Tandu' (probably Nandikeswara) to teach the 'Karanas' and 'Angaharas' and Brahma created twenty-four celestial damsels like Sukesi, Manju Kesi, Misra Kesi, Sulochana, Suvadana, Sumukhi etc. From

these divine damsels many other Indra's favourite dancers learnt the 'Karanas' and 'Angaharas'. Probably one of them, Urvashi, brought it down to earth during the time she was in love with a human monarch, Pururavas. Through the palace maidens of this monarch, this Kaisikhi style spread on earth.

We see clearly why commentators have differed as to the meaning of the words Natya, Nr̥tta, Nr̥t̥tya, and Nartana. These controversies have been raised from the time of Amarasimha down to this day.

This inclusion or intrusion of dance into drama at least shows that even in the early days Natya Sastra continued to develop and expand. In times of peace and prosperity and progress of civilization, the ways of the richer and the most educated classes were imitated by their inferiors. The folk plays were enriched by the deeper insight, finer poetry, and better synchronisation of mime, poetry, music, and the play of accompanying instruments. Similarly, the more civilized forms derived some fresh themes, vigour and vitality by the cross fertilization. In times of distress classical arts degenerated into variations for entertainment of the vulgar. This has always been a phenomenon in every country with regard to all forms of art like music, architecture, poetry, dance, wearing apparel and even forms of worship. These movements are bound to go on as long as beauty chases art, discovers its possibilities in the raw and rude, waiting to be picked up, polished and refined.

This is probably the reason why Bharata himself says in the course of his Sastra that the last word on the subject

has not been spoken. He says that his sons, meaning thereby the later followers of his teachings whom he calls Bharataputras, will make their own contributions, which are to be accepted as if they came out from his own mouth. Among some of the one hundred sons mentioned are Kohala, Dattila, Shantilya, Kerala and Bargava.

It may be of some interest to note that in the 36th chapter, at the close of his great work, he tells the assembled distinguished audience that the practitioners of this Natya Sastra will get all their wishes on earth fulfilled and ultimately will go to Heaven.

This only reinforces what traditionalists have asserted, that the pleasure given by fine arts is the brother of Brahma Ananda. To his doubting disciples the great Buddha himself asserted that impersonating actors and the authors of fictitious episodes who lied like truth but gave the audience pure pleasure without either side making an unlawful gain or unjust impoverishment, do deserve to go to Heaven. The pleasures of art can be indulged in without physical ruin or financial loss or social injury. In Aristotle's words, they are useful citizens enriching the human heart and elevating the sentiments and removing impure thoughts by means of pity and terror.

Though Bharata has in his Natya Sastra mentioned only 8 movements for the head, 36 for the eyelids, the pupils and the rasa drishtis, 9 for the cheeks and 7 for the chin, these have been considerably increased by the commentators of later ages. There are detailed descriptions for

the movements of the fingers, palms and wrists, lower hand upper arm, the foot and the calf muscles and movements of every part of the human body.

Occasionally a serious student of art may be vexed with the amount of monotony he sees in some modern performances of Bharata Natya. The same song, the same tala, the same step, the same broad smile, the same imperfect posture, the dullness and the staleness of the whole affair may make one wonder how this art manages to survive. He may be told that it is unjust to judge any art by the failures of its exponents. Hopes of an enriched, vitalised, growing and conquering Bharata Natya are certainly on the horizon.

Even in the recent past the richer and more privileged classes disdained this art and left it to its poor and despised exponents. Now the most aristocratic sections of society send their daughters to learn this Bharata Natyam. Those students are educated in the university sense of the word. Some of these do buy text books of Natya Sastra, commentaries on it, critical guides by performing artistes and visit temples whose sculptures reproduce parts of the Natya Sastra and compare the sculptures of one temple with those of another etc. They discuss with other students. They take photographs, make video tapes of these sculptures, record songs on cassettes and use all methods of modern education and thus are enabled to read deeper into meanings of the texts.

Further Government-sponsored cultural groups from one part of the country travel to all other places and these visits are repaid by other groups. It is common knowledge that some parts of India have preserved and developed one aspect of Bharata's teaching more than another.

Forexample, the Malabar artistes have preserved more of the Netra Abhinaya and the Arabhati style, i.e., warlike movements and mimic fighting including the use of sword and shield. The Kaisikhi style is better developed in Tamil Nadu. The poetry of the movements of the limbs is very well developed by the Manipuri style. The Sringara movements are also found well developed in Andhra Pradesh etc. So exchanges of artistes between the various parts of India are found to bring back the glory of Bharata Natya.

The visits by foreign students like those from France, America, and even China benefit our country and our culture. They find some similarities of their own style of dancing and *vice versa*. They bring a fresh spirit of enquiry and even work harder because they can't afford to stay long; Strangely enough the outside world has come to know of India by two entirely unconnected factors: viz. (1) The non-alignment policy formulated by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and (2) Bharata Natya.

Our students find that when they begin to dance a Natya on the stage they are privileged to have the benefits of several fine arts—the fine clothes they wear, their handsome jewellery, the products of the florist's art, the work of the make-up artistes and displaying their talents to the accompaniment of fine poetry, exquisite music, enchanting tala etc. They are themselves happy. They spread happiness to the members of the audience. Therefore I have no hesitation in predicting a brighter future for Bharata Natya—(Keynote address delivered at the 7th Natyakala Conference of the Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras on 19—12—1987.)

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Narayana Theerthar's Aradhanai Festival 1988

A REPORT

To Thanjavur, the epic centre of the traditional arts of Tamilnadu, belongs the unique honour and privilege of nurturing and patronising the Trinity as well as other saint composers Narayana Theertha, Boddhendra Swami, Sadasiva Brahmendra, Melatur Venkatarama Sastri and others. Experts and scholars feel that the Trinity were much inspired by the compositions of Narayana Theerthar. Nowka Charitham and Prahlada Bhaktha Vijayam, the two outstanding musical plays of Saint Tyagaraja, could be the outcome of such influences.

Bhajana Sampradaya

The evolution of a strong Bhajana Sampradaya tradition, which dates back to the fifteenth century and earlier, shows that the sages, sanyasis and saints sought to realise God through singing, dancing, especially during the divine birthday festivals.

Thiruppoonthuruthi is a small but picturesque village about fifteen km. to the west of Thanjavur. In the above tiny village lies the Jeeva Samadhi of Sri Narayana Theerthar, one of the eminent Vaggeyakaras. of the pre-Tyagaraja period.

The Tharangams

He was a great devotee of Lord Krishna and his musical compositions in the form of slokas, keerthanams and tharangams were set to the Bhajana Sampradaya

style, but are suitable also for concert singing. All of them are replete with religious fervour born out of his complete surrender and devotion to Lord Krishna. His Krishna Leela Tharangini is one of the masterpieces of music literature from the viewpoints of diction, poetry, sringaram and bhakthi.

Though conflicting views prevail about his origin and parentage, researchers and scholars are unanimous that he migrated from Andhra Pradesh to Varahur. The Aradhana festival of Sri Narayana Theerthar is regularly being conducted at Thiruppoonthuruthi where he attained Jeevan Mukthi. It was the late Dr. V. Raghavan who suggested the celebration of this annual festival to commemorate the saint composer's life and work. In recent years, with the untiring efforts and dedication of Thiruppoonthuruthi Venkatesan, a devotee of the saint and a singer of the Tharangams with a band of devoted and enthusiastic workers behind him, the popularity and significance of this ardhana festival have drawn national attention and importance.

The 1988 Festival

The 1988 festival was held on three days, from the 22nd to 24th February 1988. The celebration attracted attention through the participation of many eminent and popular Carnatic musicians, vocal and

instrumental. A big Pandal was erected inside the open ground facing the shrine, with a raised platform in the middle for the musicians and artistes to perform. The entire village during the festival wore a festive look.

Inauguration By Dr. MSS

The festival was inaugurated by Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi by lighting the Kuthuvilakku. Sri G. Selvam, Station Director, A.I.R., Madras, presided over the function. Sri S. Venugopal Reddy, Station Director, A.I.R. Trichy distributed certificates and prizes to the students who were successful in the Tharangam singing competition. Mr. M. Ramu, IAS. Collector of Thanjavur, a connoisseur of arts and an ardent music lover, in his brief address stressed the unique contribution of Narayana Theerthar in the music and dance spheres. Earlier, Sri T. Venkatesan, Secretary of the Organising Committee of the Festival, in his welcome address, expressed his gratification that the annual

festival was growing more and more popular. Smt Sivasankari, the noted Tamil novelist, V. V. Swarnavenkatesa Dikshitar, Sri T. N. Ramachandran and others spoke on Narayana Theertha's bhakti cult.

Concerts

Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi rendered five Tharangams with divine melody and appeal. Flute Sikkil sisters, K. J. Yesudas, V. Ramachandran, Smt Padma Narayanaswamy, G. N. Desikan etc gave good concerts consisting of the tharangams mainly. Sri Janakiraman and Smt Kamala Murthy gave Kathakalakshepams of merit.

The village folk evinced much interest in the celebrations. The divinity, devotion and dignity of the saint's compositions; soaked in bhakthi, are having a greater impact on the public than at any time before.

Dr. K. L. RAMAN, Asst. Secretary,
Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram

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THE NUANCES OF "RA!"

Tyāgarāja's Songs Yearning for Rāma's Presence

By

Prof. WILLIAM J. JACKSON, Indiana University, Indianapolis, U.S.A.

If I were asked for a single word most characteristic of the mood of Tyāgarāja's vast body of lyrics and music, one which comes to mind immediately is the Telugu word *rā*. In many songs this word of demand, literally meaning "Come!", a prayer for the presence of Lord Rāma, is the gist of the message. To give one example, the song *Bhavanuta nā hṛdayamuna* contains the refrain "Come, sport inside my heart, doing away with this weariness." When trying to translate the word *rā* into English the word most often used is the obvious exclamatory cry "Come!" The sound of the single syllable *rā* is simple. But this one syllable sung in various songs to different melodies is more involved than the word "Come" would imply. Let us explore the significance and some examples of this word used by Tyāgarāja.

In *Rārā mā inṇidāka* Tyāgarāja sings again and again: "Come over to our home, heroic Raghu; beautiful youth, come on, I beseech you, please do!" The implication of this single syllable is "I am miserable without you, Lord Rāma. Therefore, approach, be here, where you are more than welcome; come so that I may go from this miserable situation of being bereft of you. If you come, because your presence means an upliftment to peace and bliss, your downcoming automatically ensures an up-going of my experience; a transcendental resolution to my human dilemmas."

Rā, called out to Lord Rāma, is the informal address, a familiar, even short-tempered, impatient demand, spoken as if to a family member or one known very well. *Rā* is a seeking of a way out which is beyond the constant coming and going of human joy and grief, it is a cry of the heart from deep within, demanding a realization of the divine even more deeply within. Tyāgarāja's demanding attitude in many songs suggests that he felt quite positively about having fulfilled his obligations as a faithful servant and devotee of Rāma.

In *Dayajūcūṭakidi vēlarā* Tyāgarāja's refrain is "Look on me with love this very instant! Come, O Daśaratha's son!" In one line the singer reminds his Lord: "Once upon a time you gave a command, and I performed the tasks with all my joyous heart...."

A number of Tyāgarāja's songs argue from a position of feeling wronged or neglected by the Lord. The devotee self-righteously maintains that he deserves better treatment at the hands of Rāma, whom he accuses of forgetfulness, and he urges the Lord to set right these wrongs. These songs are expressive of a feeling of intimacy - a formal relationship with an authority figure would not allow for such familiarity in the tone of complaint. In *Sāketa niketana* ("The one whose abode is

Ayodhya") Tyāgarāja asks Rāma, "Did you not say, 'I will protect you'? I became enamoured of you alone; how is it that you have this careless attitude? Complaining of such neglect, I desired your arrival so much! Do not make excuses and stay away, or people will talk". Here the *bhakta* takes the voice of a jilted lover asking "What will the neighbors say?" and demanding the beloved's presence to silence ridicule.

Righteously and impatiently Tyāgarāja asks in *Ēlanī daya rādu*, "How is it that your grace has not come? Will you neglect me? Is this not the proper time to protect me?" Is a similar mood, but seemingly in more desperate straits he asks (in *Enduku daya rādu*)

- P. Why has your mercy not come? O Rāmacandra!"
- A. Thinking my pleas mere noise, have you forgotten me? Are you not there? Why has your mercy not come?
- C. 1. Unable to bear the useless and ceaseless ocean of existence, I have become terrified and I tremble like droplets on a lotus leaf; --seeing me like this, cloud-hued unequalled hero, why has your mercy not come?
- C. 2. I cannot form friendships with people who experience over and over the ocean of evil things! My body, O Rāma, has become half of what it was! Seeing me like this, O Lotus-eyed, immaculate form-- Why has your mercy not come?
- C. 3. Why this delay? Do you say 'This is not the time'? If you do, then

say, which way shall I go, sir? Without you there is no protection. You are the shelter of the poor, Lord adored by Tyāgarāja, your life enables the crossing! Why has your mercy not come?

This song suggests a mood of disappointment and depression, as if sung in difficult times - the people around the pining singer seem to be engaged in habitual evil, the weight of the singer's body is half of its previous amount, and protection in this dark night of the soul does not seem to be forthcoming. Tyāgarāja seems to assert that he has been faithful and deserves to be better cared for.

Another song (*Vandanamu*) also depicts the mood of pleading for succor, standing firm amid tribulations, and uncomprehending bewilderment that Rama should be so unobliging. After an obeisance and invocation of three epithets of Rāma, Tyāgarāja begins the interrogation: "Why this argument with me? Does it give you happiness? Is it such a burden to save me? Should I send a messenger?" In the third *caranam* he asserts: "I believed in you; I said 'I take refuge in you.' I said 'Come!' In the next, he promises that he will not run away, or give up his devotion, or approach others. Next, he requests that Rāma ask for sweet betel leaves and then offer boons. Then he asks "What is the profit of this to you? Do you think me vile?" Asking Rāma to "look upon us, save us, join us willingly," reminding Rāma of the supposed power of his name, Tyāgarāja demands "Come quick, Ocean of mercy, Dweller in Tyāgarāja's heart!"

Another song (*Endu dāgināḍo*) expresses puzzlement as to Rāma's whereabouts.

asking "Where has he hidden himself? He has not come here; when will his grace come, O mind? Why this fickleness? Hear my request: Just as in the old days, to save devotees, he has hidden himself--where? He has not come here; when will his grace come, O mind" The first *caranam* recalls the story of Hiranyakasipu putting his son Prahāda through ordeals; the Lord, unable to bear the thought of the steadfast devotee suffering, emerged from a pillar. "But where has the Lord hidden himself today," Tyāgarāja asks. Then Rāma is pictured as hiding behind the palmyra tree when he rescued Sugrīva. Again likening Rāma's hiddenness to a dramatic incident, he pleads for Rāma to come out and end the frustrating hide and seek game.

Such insistent songs, demanding the appearance of the Lord, whom the devotee feels is obligated to demonstrate his presence, are plentiful in Tyāgarāja's corpus of works. "Again and again I am crying to you alone, but your mind shows no pity on me," the singer complains in *Mari mari ninnē*. After mentioning Purāṇic characters who enjoyed the Lord's protection, he demands that the Lord make known his glory, saying he cannot bear the neglect and that he will not listen to any excuses. Thus, in a confident mood he often makes his demands known with boldness of tone. In *O raṅga śāyi*, for example, he complains: "When I call you, Cannot you say 'I'm coming' and then come?" He complains that he has suffered much among people jealous of others' good fortune.

In another song complaining of neglect (*Ā daya śrīraghuvara*) Tyāgarāja asks: "Seeing me among people who look on with contempt should you hide your mercy?"

The *caranams* remind Rama of incidents in which Tyāgarāja's worthiness was recommended to Rāma by Sītā, by Bhārata (who is depicted in the song as having said, "Tyāgarāja is every bit as much a devotee as I am"), and by Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma's brother. When these events took place is not mentioned. Elsewhere, Tyāgarāja speaks as one harassed:

"Why does that compassion of yours not come today, Śrīraghuvara, Ocean of mercy? Having taught me with joy the secret of true devotion. Did you not say all the harm caused to me by beating and abuse was done (as if) to you? Did you not ask me to bear the suffering of countless abuses? Did you not console me? Did you not make my body shine, giving me sustenance, giving rice and betel? You said 'We are your parents who gave birth to you.' Did you not give courage to Tyāgarāja? Why does that compassion of yours not come today..." the singer asks.

One could present many songs by Tyāgarāja in which he feels neglected, reminds Rāma of previous moments of mercy or promises, and urgently demands affectionate reassurance.

In *Rāmacandra nī daya* Tyāgarāja humorously asks: Why does your grace not come? Is it because of your rage at being called a woman?" referring to the Rāmāyaṇa episode in which Sītā called Rāma a woman when he would not fulfill her wishes. Tyāgarāja is being impolite to bring up the incident, but that is a means to emphasize his urgency. He further asks Rāma if he is out of sorts from having had to fast while exiled, or from some other annoyances. In this mood the singer will

act naive and use any means as a lever to move his Lord and get a response, even embarrassing him with a reference to an insult.

In *Eṭṭa nilicitē nādu* Tyāgarāja asks "If you were to come and stand before me, what wealth would be lost?" Literally, *sommu* means "money, property, goods, jewels" and, by extension, status or prestige. Thus Tyāgarāja is implying that the Lord is miserly, worried about losing his goods, hesitant to make expenditures. Tyāgarāja, in this song, sincerely and reassuringly promises he will not exceed what is his due. He asks Rāma what kind of heroism he is showing in this matter, and says that "in days gone by this neglect of me did not exist," and he asks why Rāma is now exhibiting such injustice (*haramitanamu*).

Tyāgarāja's lyrics are often complaints about Rāma's absence and singing is a substitute activity for the blissful union the

singer would prefer; but the songs also enact an overcoming of the depression caused by estrangement. Because we hear them now they triumph over time. However much they please us, Tyāgarāja's lyrics, expressing the urge for union remind us "Singing is sweet, but remember this: lips only sing when they cannot kiss!" Yet the hope is held out that a bhakta's singing brings closer the desired embrace and prepares for union with each petulant *rā* "Come here. Be with me. Meet me halfway. Please show you care."

Tyāgarāja is remembered by many South Indians as the devotee whose faith and musical skill were both so great that when he sang "Come! Lord Rāma!" he caused Rāma to appear and do away with weariness. Through his songs of longing this master-musician-saint showed others the way to overcome the pangs of separation, and to find union of *bhakta* and *Bhagavān* in mutuality.

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S. ANANTHA SESHAN

Cultural Scene in Bombay

By

Kum. Ranjani Mani

NITIE in Powai, a technical educational institute, organised a violin duet by Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman and his son, Shri G. J. R. Krishnan under the banner 'Synergy 87'. The setting was ideal with the sylvan beauty of nature as the backdrop. From Garudadhvani Varnam to Telang tillana, it was like a painting in music. Jayaraman's exposition of Abhogi raga had a lilt of his own while Krishnan excelled in Mohanam, with full bhava and melody. Vellore Ramabhadran gave a fine example of playing for a solo recital. The excellent acoustics of the hall and the atmosphere made it a feast to the ear and the eye.

Devotion in Music.

The Shanmukhananda Sabha has from time to time been arranging many lecture-demonstrations in the Mini Auditorium, which are very innovative and informative. One such was a delightful musical presentation from Shri Sethalpati S. R. Balasubramaniam, a student of the late Shri Papanasam Sivan. He analysed the beauty and structure of each Sivan piece with erudition and originality, explaining the meaning, rhyme pattern and the context that led Sivan to compose songs like "Sri vatapi" (Sahana), "Kapali" (Mohanam) and many more. Devotional zest (bakti and rakti) was evident in his songs. Demonstrations like Shri Balasubramaniam's help to expand the rasika's knowledge.

Youthful Exuberance

Young Vijaya Siva has a pleasing and resonant voice. The Kanada varnam (Neranammidi) was in good tempo. He has a good repertoire, but the concert fell flat due to the poor selection of kritis perhaps. Dhanyasi, sung very early in the concert, did not create any impact. However, he did full justice to the Khambodi raga, tanam and pallavi. The Pallavi in Adi tala was a neat laya exercise. The overdose of Tamil compositions could perhaps be avoided, to achieve a better balance and appeal. Meera Narayan's violin playing was well suited to the musician. Guruvayur Dorai, kept the concert going with his polished mridangam playing. The thani by Dorai and his student Jayaraman (Kanjira) was a treat in which Kanda nadai sollus were conspicuous.

The next day's concert was by the veteran musician. Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy. A flexible voice with elusive charm, depth, briga and grip over alapana are some of the persuasive features of his style which were very much to the fore on that day. Varali, Charukesi and Kedargaula were the sparkling gems of the evening. Dorai and Jayaraman played up to his form.

HARIKATHA : STORY IN MUSIC AND POETRY

It was a packed house that

heard Brahmashri V. S. Venkataramana Rao's 'Hanumantha Prabhavam' and 'Tiruneelakantha Nayanar'. He has a nice, soft, style of narrating the story. With command over four languages, he sings and elucidates the meaning of the songs. His discourse has a fine blend of scholarship, clarity and evocativeness. Harikathas are few & far between and one would like to see at least one or two in a year for spiritual uplift and entertainment.

Thyagaraja's Aradhana

The New Year began with festive gaiety and traditional splendour. The Sabha observed Thyagaraja Aradhana with sincerity and devotion in the morning. That evening it featured Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer for whom music is a sadhana. At 80 years he is performing like a young musician with great gusto. Every raga he renders is an essence and every Kirtana is succulent music. Thyagaraja Pancharatna "Entharo Mahanubhavu" "Gurujekha", "Dinamani", "Marubalka", "Dvaitamu sugama", were rendered in a manner that one never gets tired of hearing. This is the beauty and greatness of this singer. "Kamakshi" in Bhairavi, (Shyama Sastri) and Kalyani Pallavi in Adi tala added to the stature of the concert.

To sing at this age is itself a remarkable achievement, but to sing also with sruti laya and charm is an incomparable feat. V. V. Subramanian on the violin was a fitting accompaniment. T. V. Gopalakrishnan provided the right kind of rhythmic support. Over-all, a memorable concert.

Powerful Voice

Chembur Fine Arts featured a music concert by T. V. Sankaranarayanan in its

Annual Festival. After an invocation to Lord Ganesha in Arabhi (Vigneswara), Poorvi Kalyani, Kamas, Todi and Mohanam were the delectable pieces of the concert. His swaras are a treat to hear especially those with the sarvalagu patterns. He uses his powerful Sruti Suddha voice with discernment. M. S. Gopalakrishnan was true to his reputation as a superb accompanist, while Dorai on the mridangam was seen as a restraining influence whenever the vocalist was racing through.

A trip to Paradise

M. S. G's recital at Anushakti Nagar was like Lord Nataraja dancing the Tandavam. His fingers literally danced over the instrument producing ineffably sweet music consisting of Pantuvarati, Todi, and Kanada, and Nattakurinji which was the main raga chosen for Pallavi in Tishra Tripudai Tala & was a neat exercise in rhythm, control and precision. The lighter pieces in the Hindusthani style were melodic to the core. Dorai's tani was refreshing and unique. He can enhance the enjoyment of a recital, especially instrumental—in contrast to the overblown manner of some present day Mridangists. Jayaraman was good on the Kanjira.

Crystal Music : Style and Technique

Ravi Kiran, true to his 'Child Prodigy' legend has grown into a mature artist who is a firm classisist. He never resorts to gimmicks. Gottuvadyam is a difficult instrument to master but in his hands it is child's play. "Siddivinayakam" in Shanmukha-priya was a smooth take-off. "Sri Mathrubhutam" (Kannada), "Paramabavana", Poorvi Kalyani) and the niraval and swara patterns proved his impeccable scholarship and laya gnana. The Todi Pallavi in Chatusra Tripudai Tala was a detailed and well

planned exercise. Behag and Sindhu Bhairavi, the lighter melodies, offered a pleasing finale to the concert. K. Usha on the violin gave fine support. Mannargudi Easwaran (Mridangam) played well. His thani along with Jayaraman (Kanjira) was pleasing.

Sruti-Laya.

Mridangam Karaikudi Mani is a sound Sruthi-Laya and innovative mridangam player. Always aiming to do something unique and different he has produced the Tala Vadya ensemble, a great creative effort in rhythm.

It is a thrilling laya dialogue between Mridangam, Kanjira, Ghatam etc. with background music coming from flute, violin and even guitar. Ramani began with a fine Bahudari with S. D. Sridhar on the violin. Mani and the group presented the Adi tala in different gaits like Tisra, Chatusra and Mishra chapu, which were imaginative and impressive, revealing the richness of our laya traditions and Mani's originality in presenting them to modern audiences. Mani and Harishankar (Kanjira) seemed to have perfect understanding. The others like T. V. Vasam (Ghatam) and Sri Rangam Kannan (Morsing) too rose to the occasion. Another rhythmic exercise followed in Kanda Jampa Tala, preceded by Kanada and Behag ragas.

The final phase was led by Raman: (flute) and A.K.C. Natarajan (clarinet). They presented a Ragam, Thanam, Pallavi in Kalyani set to Kanda Tripudai tala.

A Devoted Artist

Sai Priya Vishwanathan, a young denseuse, performed with aplomb and characteristic zeal in aid of Polio-plus campaign sponsored by the Rotary Club.

Her Guru, Smt. Nalini Raghu, has moulded Priya into a charming and graceful dancer. With a fine stage presence, she has a good control and grip over laya. The Padam in Bhairavi brought out her excellence in Abhinaya. Kudos to her Guru for excellent choreography and nattuvangam. The orchestra matched the concert well.

Ramayana Dance Drama

Darshana Dance Academy, Matunga, presented a dance drama 'Ramayana' (based on Arunachala 'Kavirayar's "Rama natakam") choreographed and directed by Smt. Ranganayai Ramani and Smt. Sudha Bharat under the auspices of Shanmukhanda Sabha. Rama, Sita and Lakshmana fitted the role well. The settings dominated the proceedings all the way. Rajan Easwaran, Murthy and Mrs. Saraswati Subramanian gave a good vocal display.

Jaishankar gave fine violin support

Violin Duo

V. V. Subramaniam and V. V. Ravi gave a violin duet performance with double Mridangam by Tanjavur Upendran and Srimushnam Raja Rao, the next day. The Gana Panchakam Varnam was arresting in quality and tonal effect. The swaraprastharas in Hamsadvani (Vatapi) and Poorvi Kalyani (Anantha Nadanna Madinar) were well planned. Poorvi Kalyani raga in the hands of V.V.S. came off in good style. His brother, V. V. Ravi, presented a neat Gauri Manohari, rich in bhava and quality. Todi Raga ("Kartikeya") was well played by V. V. S. though one felt there was less bhava than usual. The concluding pieces like Navaratna Vilasa, Khafi and Sindhu Bhairavi were appealing. Upendran and Raja Rao's thani was enthralling and made a unique impression.

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The Decline of Nagaswara Art*

By

K. S. Mahadevan

The close association of Nagaswara with temple worship is seen from the fact that it, along with Kahala, Beri, Dhavana, Dhakka, Sanka, Varagajam etc have been grouped as "Utsava Vadhyas". In the Telugu work "Kridabhiramam" (1450 A.D.) Nagaswaram is mentioned for the first time. It was an indispensable temple instrument of South India. Its utility was not only in temple music but also in martial music and royal processions. Works pertaining to the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries contain references to Nagaswaram. So we may conclude that this is one of the oldest musical instruments, which along with the growth of art music, became ideally suited for producing classical music.

Temple Ritual

The Tiruvarur temple of the deity Thyagaraja had a highly systematised role for Nagaswara, to which Ramaswami Dikshitar (1735-1817 A.D.), father of Muthuswami Dikshitar contributed substantially by way of Varnam in Sahana raga "Vasi Vasi Yanuchu", chowka varnam in Sriranjini "Sami Ninne Kori", "Yala ninne" in Purnachandrika and "Valachi Vachi" in Hindola Vasantham. The Nagaswaram repertoire could claim 17 varnams in Navaroz, Kedaram, Ritigowla, Yadukulakhambodi etc. by a clutch of other composers including Tiruvarur

Ramaswami Pillai and other unknown great ones of earlier times. This point deserves special stress if only because Nagaswara vidvans of the present day have largely discarded them.

Mallari & Rakti Melam

The two bulwarks of the old Nagaswara tradition were the Mallari and the Rakti Melam. Mallari is a tune in Gambira Nattai raga played by Nagaswara Vidvans when the deity is taken out of the temple premises. It actually served to call the people from their houses to witness and worship the idol's procession. From the earliest days, it was a tune, bereft of sahitya backing totally, but based on complicated talas which sometimes severely tested the laya expertise of the Taval Vidwan.

In those days, Nagaswaram was played as an accompaniment to dance as well, hence the need arose to distinguish the role of the piper from the dance. Nagaswaram was therefore honoured by the title "Periamelam" (meaning "more important music"). This distinction is important as showing the emerging superiority of Nagaswaram as an instrument of classical music.

The other limb of Nagaswaram playing was styled as "Rakti Melams". "Rakti" means full, aesthetic, attractive. Its main feature was extensive raga alapana,

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especiallay in ragas like Todi, Nattaikurinji, Khambodhi etc. Special attention was given to the detailed picturisation of the raga and playing of intricate Pallavis therein. Imagination was given free rein and every facet of the raga was explored. It was not uncommon to hear arakti raga rendered for hours, a thing impossible in vocal music. Thanjavur became the centre of Nagaswaram music and the famous nagaswara artists like Semponnar Ramaswami Pillai, Tirumarugal Natesa pillai. Chinna Pakkiri, the Tiruvizhmalai Brothers Subramaniam, and Nataraja Sundaram, Tiruvidaimaruthur Veeraswami Pillai and T. N. Rajarathnam Pillai provided a solid phalanx of indescribably great music. Another remarkable feature of Nadaswara is that even in raga alapana, the Tavil Vidvan—some of them famous in history like Kannuswami, Meenakshisundaram Pillai, Panchapagesan etc.—used to accompany Nagaswara the like of which is to be seen in Hindusthani classical music in which the tabla accompanies the vocalist or instrumentalist even in raga, alap.

The Trinity's Contribution

Up till the early 19th Century, the Nagaswara tradition, however glorious with Rakti melam, Pallavi singing etc. was without a blue-print to fall back upon. It is only when the great Trinity burst upon the musical scene, with their enormous output of Kritis—pieces rich in melody, with elaborate scope for musical imagination and with a structure consisting of Pallavi, Anupallavi, Sarana, Sangathis etc standardising the lakshanas of ragas - that Nagaswara players could exploit fully the concentrated musical wisdom of the past and build tiers upon tiers of the fascinating temple of music.

It is not generally appreciated that there was constant interaction between the great vocalists and the Nadaswara Vidwans. For example, Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer of the Titans of Karnatak music, was in close touch with Mahavidwan Tiruvarur Swaminatha Nayanakkar and Chinna Pakkiri of the Nagaswaram clan.

The Kiranur Brothers, Kannappa Pillai and Chinnathampi, learnt Kritis from Conjeevaram "Nayana" Pillai; Tiruppambaram Nataraja Sundaram Pillai learnt kritis etc from Veena Dhanammal and the Violin maestro, Tirukodikaval Krishna Iyer. That genius T. N. Rajarathnam, in his earlier days, learnt Varnams, krithis etc from the same Krishna Iyer, while learning nagaswaram from his great uncle Natesan. When the famous Nagaswara Vidwans were playing at festivals, etc their mentors or contemporaries were in gracious attendance. Those were days of artistic fusion between the vocalists and the instrumentalists—a shining example of collaboration and interaction between artists that alas, is not much in evidence today. This has probably contributed to the decadence in Nagaswaram art today.

The Bari Nagaswaram

Another possible reason for this sorry state affairs may be the advent of the Bari nagaswaram in preference to the centuries-old Timiri nagaswaram. The latter was shorter in length, had a higher sruthi and lent itself to easy manipulation of the 12 holes as they were much closer than in the Bari variety which is absurdly long and has a ridiculously low Adhara Sruthi. The Bari has also the disadvantage that the Suddha Madhyama note does not emerge properly from it and the relevant hole has

to be manipulated with wax. Only the genius of T. N. Rajarathnam got away with it, due to his phenomenal technical virtuosity. Moreover, while the Mandhara Sthayi on the Timiri instrument yielded a highly melodic, sonorous tone beloved of music lovers and exploited fully by TNR, the Bari instrument provides only an unmusical frog-croak since the necessary wind pressure is lacking.

A great revival of the great Nagaswaram tradition and recapture of the stirring music of earlier decades may not perhaps be seen until the reasons for its decadence are eliminated.

The correct name

Finally, a word about how the instrument should be called. In recent years, the word "Nadaswaram" has come into usage, which is unfortunate as it has no basis in tradition. The correct word is "NAGASWARAM" for which the authorities are as follows:

1. Muthuswamy Dikshitar in his kriti in Sri raga "Tyagaraja Mahaadwajaro" says:

"Agama Siddhanta Pratibhadyam
Ananda Chandrasekara Vedyam
Nagaswara Maddaladhi Vadyam
Namarupa Athitham Anadyam"

2. A descendant of Talapakkam Annamacharya is reported to have engaged two "Nagaswaras" Vide inscription of A.D. 1554 (Tirupati Epi. Rep. I, P. 29)

3. Provision was made for a "Dolukara and Nagasrakara" (Kanarese) in A.D.

1632 (Mysore Epigraphical report of 1923 (P. 112))

4. Dr. A. M. Meewarth mentions "Nagaswara" in his "Guide to Musical Instruments" exhibited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

5. The Irattinagara Ula (16 Century) mentions the word "Nagaswara" in Tamil.

6. The Tamil Lexicon confirms the correctness of "Nagaswara".

7. Bharata Senapaty published from the Mahamahopadyaya U. Swaminatha Iyer Library in Tamil has the word as Nagaswaram.

8. In his Presidential Address to the Music Academy in 1961, Sangitha Kalanidhi Veeruswami Pillai, used the word "Nagaswaram" only.

9. "Isai Pannpu", a Tamil book of K.C. Thyagarajan, a scholar, confirms "Nagaswaram" as correct.

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Cultural Scene in Karnataka

By

T. B. Narasimhachar

We have only hearsay reports of how our cultural troupes, which participated in the Festival of India in Russia conducted themselves and impressed the Russians. But during the third and fourth weeks of December 1987, the people of Karnataka had first-hand experience of how the Russian troupes presented themselves before the Indian people during the Festival of Russia in India. Though the prime motive of both countries in organising these festivals bi-laterally may have been a desire to establish and improve political ties, our cultural buffs must have learnt many lessons by observing their representatives. Naturally enough, the investments on both sides must have been enormous. In Bangalore the programme at the Cricket stadium could easily have attracted about 25,000 people who watched the proceedings with bated breath. It was a lesson in organisation, discipline, coordination, showmanship, etc. The ensembles were colourful beyond imagination—with pop musicians, folk artistes, disco dancers, circus artistes, etc. but all of them selected, trained and fostered by the Russian Government, unlike our artistes, who are often left to fend for themselves, however talented they are. All the shows were captivating and spectacular.

Workshop on Pallavis

The Percussive Arts Centre stole a march over other institutions by welcoming the New Year with a Workshop on

Pallavis. On the 1st and 2nd of January this year, in collaboration with the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, Vidwan R. K. Srikanthan delivered the keynote address and various musicians-juniors and seniors-participated in the pallavi recitals and lecture-demonstrations. Notably V. M. Sundaram from Pondicherry, R. Vedavalli and Chingleput Ranganathan from Madras, N. P. Ramaswami from Cochin were some of the visiting participants. Prof. T. R. Subrahmanyam of the Delhi University gave the valedictory address and rendered a Pallavi.

Musicians' Conference.

The indefatigable percussion maestro, Bangalore Venkataraman, who master-minded the Workshop on Pallavis so successfully, followed it up by organising the 18th Musicians' conference and Music festival for 5 days. from the 3rd of January on behalf of the Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat. Smt. Neelamma Kadambi, the 78 year old Veena vidushi, presided over the conference and received the title 'GANA KALA BOOSHANI'. The highlight of the morning academic sessions this year was the two-day Seminar on "Nagaswara" in which both local and outside artistes and speakers participated (See separate report). It is noteworthy that Sri K. S. Mahadevan, Editor, "Shanmukha" was an invitee-observer-cum-participant in the Seminar on Nagaswaram.

Smt. Nagalaksmi Suryanarayana presented a paper on the compositional elegance of Muthuswami Dikshitar's krithis. N. P. Ramaswami of Cochin, a descendant of Palghat Parameswara Bhagavathar, a senior contemporary and one of the mentors of Maharaja Swathi Thirunal, sang some of the Bhagavathar's compositions. G. Rajanarain, an young Electronics Engineer, who has to his credit such inventions as Electronic Sruthi box, the 'Talometer', 'Coil tester', 'Tanpura', etc and is a professional flutist in his own right, presented his latest invention 'TAALAMALA' an electronic Tabla for use by Hindusthani Musicians. It is designed in such a way as to produce 'tekas' and 'Bols' for the various talas used in Hindusthani music with adjustable speeds for vilambit and Drut gatis. There is also provision for soft or loud sound output.

Vocalist T. K. Ramamurthi of Tumkur presented a paper on the musicians of his hometown Tumkur. He named both well-known and lesser known vocalists and instrumentalists. Nirmala Sundarajan and Subhashini Parthasarathi from Madras rendered some Javalis and Padams (in the Veena Dhanammal tradition) of Govindaswami. Pattabhiramayya, Kshetragna, Dharmapuri Subbaraya and Patnam Subrahmanya Iyer in the ragas Sankarabharanam, Bilahari, Bhairavi Pharaj, Sahana and Suruti, with only the Tambora. The result was evocative. Purandaradasa being the cynosure of all organisers in this state recently, a special feature titled 'Purandara Spandana' was presented by Smt. Nagmani Srinath, a popular vocal

list of Mysore, with two lead male vocalists and a few lady vocalists, supported by veena, violins, flutes and tabla. In presenting the variety in Dasa's compositions, the speaker used Pillari Geetas compositions with philosophical messages, dialogues between Ravana and Hanuman, songs with Vatsalya bhava, including a lullaby. It left a mixed reaction.

There was a Music Teachers' meet to exchange views on the problems of teaching music in the contemporary set-up. Dr. Padma Murthy presented a paper on the evolution and structural analysis of 'VARNAS'. She said that 'Varna' had an important position in Carnatic music both during practice and in concert presentation as it helps in voice culture. She quoted from several authorities in support of her contention and explained the implications of the Poorvanga and Uttaranga in a varna. She listed many composers of Varnams and explained the special features of an Ata Tala varnam. Tanjavor Upendran, the senior mridangist, spoke about and demonstrated the varieties of Chapu talas, Desadi Madhyadi and Dhruva-Roopaka salas and their relevance in contemporary concert music.

There was an interesting symposium on present day classical music concerts and audience response in which some musicians and music critics participated. A Sugam Sangit (Light music) concert by Smt. Pankaja Simba and a Bharathanatyam recital by the mother and daughter combination of Guru Lalitha Srinivasan and Miss Manu Srinivasan, in connection with the 5th birth centenary of Saint Kana-

kadasa, attracted attention. In the evening concerts T. R. Subrahmaniam of Delhi, Dr. S. Ramaswami of Madras, Smt. K. G. Kanakalakshmi and Dr. R. N. Srilatha of Mysore figured as visiting artistes. Veteran vocalist from Mysore, Titta Krishna Iyengar, carried the audience with him by the vigour, vitality and involvement he brought to bear upon his rendering of krithis and the Taanamaalika in Arabhi, Varali, Reetigola and Sri, in a now defunct tradition of singing swaras along with Tanam. A book of selected compositions (Vol. 2) edited and published by vidwan Mathur Shankaramurthi in Kannada was also released on the occasion. It contains select compositions of Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Mysore Vasudevachar, Poochi Iyengar and the Sriranga Pancharatna krithis of Tyagaraja.

Dance and Purandaradasa

It is now the turn of dancers of various schools to glorify Purandaradasa through dance in continuation of the 5th birth centenary celebrations. Gandharva Vidya Niketan of Bangalore, the brainchild of Minister Dr. Jeevaraj Alva and his wife Mrs. Nandini Alva a dancer in her own right—sponsored a twoday 'Purandara Nrityotsava' at the Chowdiah Memorial Hall, on January 18th. Teachers, dancers, and dance buffs flocked to the hall to witness a unique dance festival which presented contiguously reputed dancers and dance troupes from the four southern states, in half-hour recitals of Bharathanatyam, Kuchipudi, and Kathakkali. Karnataka's own Yakshana was prominent by its absence, as nobody seems to have attempted the subject. The programmes

brought out the interpretative and choreographic skills of the various Gurus and their wards. Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari, Kala Krishna, Lakshmi Viswanathan, Chitra Visweswaran, the Dhananjayans, Krishnaveni Lakshmanan, constituted the galaxy of artistes from Madras and Hyderabad while the Kerala Kala Mandalam troupe joined in. The last named chose the familiar 'Kuchelopakhyanam' from the Kathakkali repertoire; the lyrics being in Samskrit, they outwitted the audience by using the signature 'Purandara Vittala' at the end. Amongst the local artistes one may mention Rashmi Hegde, the students of Guru Padmini Rao, Vasanthalakshmi and her students of Keshava Nritya Shala and Padmini Ravi, who vied for honours with visiting dancers. But the piece-de-resistance was the concluding item Tillana in Suruti composed by Mysore Vasudevachar, choreographed by Adyar Lakshman and danced by the Dhananjayans, M. V. Narasimhachari, Krishnaveni, Nitya Kalyani and Chitra Visweswaran (in the centre)

The International Dance Alliance represented by Smt. Leela Sekhar co-sponsored the programmes. Needless to add that there was a apate of Purandara, Tyagaraja Aradhana celebrations all over Karnataka from the third week of January. But the most important one was that celebrated at Mulbagal by the Sri Purandara Seva Samithi of Bangalore. During the past 13 years it celebrated the Aradhana at Hampi where the Dasa is said to have spent his last days. But due to certain obstacles the venue was changed to nearer home (Bangalore) to Mulbagal in Kolar

district where the pontiff of the Sri Sripadaraja Mutt and the citizens of Mulbagal offered full cooperation. Similarly the Sri Tyagaraja Aradhana at Srirangapatna at the Sri Kodandaramaswami temple was in a class by itself, under the devoted guidance and supervision of Mukhaveena A. V. Narayanappa. The Government of Karnataka got up ambitious Republic Day cultural programmes at 9 centres involving hundreds of performers in different fields and a lot of expenditure.

Nitya Nritya

'NUPURA' dance school being run by Guru Smt. Lalita Srinivasan presented its fifth consecutive 'Nitya Nritya' Dance festival at the Chowdiah Memorial hall over a period of 5 days from 30th January. This year both the morning academic sessions and the evening dance programmes were conducted at the same venue. For a number of reasons, Bharathanatyam struck a dominant note, with celebrities of National and home standing, like Alarmel Valli, Kanaka and Malavika Sarukkai, Vatsala Kamath, Pratibha Prahlad, Neeraja Sowani, Duo-Usha Rama Rao and Uma Chandrasekhar. Nandini Keshava Iyengar, Vyjayanthi Kasi, Vasundhara Doreswami and Padmini Seshadri constituted the Home team. The evening programmes concluded with Nupura's popular ballet on Bhakta Meera's life-Prem, Bhakti Mukthi'. The variety was provided by the Manipuri ballet 'Savitri' by the artistes of Triveni Kala Sangam and the 'Odissi' dance programme by Kum. Sujatha Misra.

Music for Dance was the main theme of this year's academic sessions, as it constitutes the very backbone of every dance programme and gives the visual impact an aural substance and meaning. Kathak Guru Maya Rao, dealt with this subject at length vis-a-vis Kathak and explained the three main ingredients of music viz., Melody, rhythm and lyrics and how their coordination and combination gave expression to the core ideas of the theme of the dance and created the necessary impact on the spectators. She chose excerpts from the ballets directed by her and with the help of some of her students illustrated her points. Guru Lalitha Srinivasan presented some samples from the innovative experiments tried by her in the choice of verses from regional literature. She started with some free movements based on the flow of raga and swara and then presented her interpretation of some Kannada Vachanas of Saint Akkamahadevi and the poems of Dr. Ku. Vem. Pattappa, a doyen amongst Karnataka's poets. The glory of Nataraja based on an old Kannada Stage hit neatly performed by her disciples was captivating.

Rajkumar Singhjit Singh, who directed the Triveni Ballet troupe of Delhi, stressed the importance of the rhythmic variety produced by a number of drums in the Manipuri tradition. He also explained the importance of the musical ingredients in his ballets as rhythm, melody and words. All the drums were used with gyrations, jumps and swinging movements and produced an experience of vigour, vitality yet

ethereal effect. Dance music in Drama in the erstwhile State of Mysore was the subject of lecture demonstration by R. Paramasivam, himself a stage artiste. This programme would have gained in impact if a stage actor-dancer had been brought on the stage to interpret the songs. Dr. R. Satyanarayana gave a lecture on Dance music with particular reference to 'Jakkini'-a dance-song form which he traced through three sources—an instrumental composition called 'Jakka', an exotic Persian form called 'Jafikaribdi' and an ethnic one from the tribe 'Jakkula' of Andhra Pradesh. He referred to the earliest mention of 'Jakkini' to a Kannada work 'Pampaa Sthana Varnanam' and textual description to Pundalika Vittala's 'Nartana Nirnaya' and explained their structure. These were rendered evocatively by his son R. S. Nandakumar. B.V.K. Sastri also played a tape recording to illustrate it. Smt. Parul Jhaveri Sastri illustrated it with a dance. The charms of Odissi dance form were brought out by Guru Srinath Rout with the help of young danseuse-Sujatha Misra. He explained how music plays an important role even in Odissi right from the opening 'Mangala charan', Pallavi, etc; how Raga swaroopa is interpreted through body movements.



These programmes often scene in juxtaposition helped in the understanding and appreciation of the basic unity behind the apparent diversity in our art forms. The difference is often attributable to the localised accent on some one aspect or the other of the basic concepts of Melody and Rhythm and of Nritya and Abhinaya. It also provided an exposure to local young aspirants to other dance forms in our country as also to Bharatha Natya as interpreted and presented by artistes from other parts of our country, under the guidance of other Gurus.

Other Festivals.

During the past couple of years some more Saint-bards are attracting the attention of organisers. In the wake of the 5th birth centenary of Kanakadasa, a contemporary of Purandaradasa at Kaginele in yadgi taluk in Karnataka during November last, the Guru Raghavendraswami Trust, Bangalore, celebrated Dasa Sahitya Pracharotsava for a week with lectures, Harikathas and music concerts. Dr. M. L. Vasanthakumari also gave a concert on the concluding day. She was also felicitated. Sri Raghavendraswami Aradhana, Mahasivaratri all-night festival of cultural programmes were other attractions during February.

Karnataka Musicians' 18th Conference-Cum-Music Festival

The Annual 18th Musicians' Conference cum Music Festival organised at the Nijaguna Kalyanakshetra by the Musicians' Forum, Karnataka Ganakala Parishat, at Bangalore, after two years of such meetings in other parts of the State, was received very warmly by the musicians, scholars and connoisseurs.

C. Honnappa Bhagavathar, Parishat President, welcomed the gathering, mostly of musicians. A brief resume of the activities of the Forum was made by the General Secretary, Bangalore K. Venkatram. Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar, Chairman of the Council of Experts, declared Sangitha Vidhushi Neelamma Kadambi as the President-elect. Sarojini Mahishi, MP and learned scholar, inaugurated the Conference. In her scholarly speech, she regretted that it took 18 years to elect a lady as the President. Neelamma Kadambi in her Presidential address felt that innovations in the teaching of lessons in music are necessary; she criticised the State Govt. for not coming to the aid of the Parishat with ample financial help, while many outsiders were paid handsomely even in Kannada Rajyothsava celebrations.

Concerts

There were concerts by Neelamma Kadambi (Veena and vocal), Dr. S. Ramaswamy, M. T. Selvanarayana, R. K. Srinivasa Murthy (Veena), Thitte Krishna Iyengar, R. K. Srikantan and K. G. Kanakalakshmi. Veterans like M. Chandrase-

kharan, S. Seshagiri Rao on Violin, A. V. Anand, Tanjore Upendran, H. P. Ramachar, V. S. Rajagopal, K. N. Krishnamurthy on percussions accompanied, while promising talents like M.A. Krishnamurthy, M. S. Govindaswamy, H. K. Narasimhamurthy, Praveen, T. T. Srinivasan, Mysore Nagaraj, Shiva, M. J. Rajakesari were featured. Physically handicapped Ananthasubramanyam, D. Suryabrapha Kanakalakshmi and an Exclusive ladies ensemble were presented. Youngsters Srimathi Jayaram, S. G. Bagyalakshmi (Veena), Uma Nagabhushan of Bombay gave their recitals supported by Yeshasvi, Moodnur Raghuram, M. K. Venugopal, A. Somasekhar, B. R. Ravikumar, Ardhanarishwaran, K. Sashikala, B. Bagyalakshmi, S. Prakash, Ranganatha Chakravarthy.

Discussions

On the academic side, papers were presented by Dr. Nagalakshmi of Madurai (on lyrical contents of Dikshithar's compositions), Tumkur Ramamurthy on musicians of Tumkur Region), Dr. Padma Murthy (on evolution of varnas). Cochin N. P. Ramaswamy rendered compositions of Palghat Parameswara Bhagavathar; Nirmala Sundararajan and Subhashini Parthasarathy of Madras rendered select Padas and Javalis of Veena Dhanammal tradition. Tanjore Upendnar explained some of the thalas like Desadi-Madyadi, Chapu etc. Raj Narayan demonstrated the Electronic Tabala, a new innovation, Nagamani Srinath of Mysore presented a musical feature "Purandara Spandana".

A symposium on the "Audience response in contemporary classical music concerts" was participated by R. K. Srikantan, G. H. Ramachandramurthy, T. B. Narasimha Rao, T. Sachidevi, T. Sharada, Padma Gurudutt, Rathna Shivashankar, S. Narayanamurthy. There was a Music Teachers' Convention chaired by Vidwan R. R. Keshavamurthy, Vice-President, which discussed their problems in detail. There was also a philatelic exhibition of stamps depicting musical instruments in addition to photographs of the earlier conference Presidents and some other concerts of the Parishat. A light music ensemble and a dance recital to mark the 5th birth centenary celebrations of Kanakadasa concluded the festival.

Resolutions

The valedictory session passed several resolutions unanimously to be taken by the Experts' Council for follow-up action. After prayer by V. Kalavathy and a brief report of the sessions by General Secretary, Rani Vijaya Devi of the Mysore royal family, delivered the valedictory address after conferring the title "Ganakala Bhushana", a Golden Insignia, Birudu Patra, shawl etc. on the Conference President Sm. Neelamma Kadambi. Gadwal Venkatappa (Tavil Vidwan), B. Doreswamy (blind Veena-vocal artist), Pandit D. B. Harindra (Hindustani musician) and Seethalakshmi Venkatesan (Karnatak Music) were honoured with Prashamsa patras, shawls etc. Maya Rao, Chairman Karnataka Sangeetha Nruthya Academy, Chief Guest, complimented the Parishat on its achievements and promised a benefit show from her Natya Institute of Choreography, D. B.

Harindra, thanked on behalf of the invitees. K. S. Mahadevan, Editor, "Shanmukha", and Sri Kolathu, Madras, spoke on behalf of the visiting delegates and applauded the achievements of the Parishat, Vimala Rangachar, vice-President welcomed and Vidwan A. Veerabhadriaiah, another Vice-President, rendered the Vote of Thanks.

Nagaswara Seminar

An adjunct was a 2-day Nagaswara Seminar in which several artistes from all the neighbouring States took part. Prof. S. K. Ramachandra Rao, chaired this scholarly session attended by over 60 scholars. Artistes from Delhi, Bombay, Andhra-Tirupati, Vijayawada, Tamilnadu-Madurai, Kerala-Cochin, Trichur, Pondicherry etc, participated. E. R. Sethuram, thanked the participants.

Scholarly papers on the historical perspective of Nagaswara in Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra were presented respectively by B. M. Sundaram (Pondicherry), B. V. K. Sastry (Bangalore), L. S. Rajagopalan (Trichur) and B. Rajanikantha Rao (Vijayawada). A paper on "Tradition & Excellence in Nagaswara" was presented by K. S. Mahadevan, Editor, "Shanmukha", Bombay. Demonstrations of Ivory & Bari Nagaswaras, Mallari and Rakthi items, traditions of Tiruvaroor Temple etc., were presented by T. S. Latchappa Pillai of Govt. College of Music, Madras, supported by Perumpallam P. Venkatesan of Annamalai University on Tavil. Manufacturing methods and Techniques of Dolu were demonstrated by N. Srinivasa Murthy of Bangalore, Recitals of folk variety included Olaga by Chitti mela Cheluvaiiah of

Harnahalli, Hassan and Shenoi by Hanu-manthappa, Shatthappa Bajanthi of Mahalingapura, Bijapur. Classical Nagaswara Recitals were rendered by Thippaiah and Narayanaswamy (Dolu), M. Kothandaram & Party, R. Parthasarathy of Mysore with C. W. Rajagopal of S. V. College of Music, Tirupati on Dolu and S. Narayana-

ppa-Saradamma and Party.

After observers' queries were answered Prof. S. K. Ramachandra Rao summed up the gist of the discussions with his own comments in his inimitable style, while E.R. Sethuram proposed a vote of thanks.

Bangalore K. Venkatram

WORKSHOP ON PALLAVIS

A 2-day Workshop on Pallavis was organised by the Bangalore Percussive Art Centre, first of its kind, at Rajam Hall, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, jointly with the Bhavan.

At the inaugural session, veteran Vocalist R. K. Srikantan in his keynote Address explained the origin, antecedents, requirements of this highly sophisticated musical art form and rendered several Pallavis to illustrate his points. A 4-kalai Adi Tala was rendered in detail with a 5/8 Eduppu. Anoor Ramakrishna and M. T. Rajakesari supported him.

In the first Session chaired by Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar, B.M. Sundaram presented a paper explaining the basic rules of Pallavi with details of the noted exponents of Pallavis. Prof. R. Visweswaran of Mysore in his paper discussed the details of renditions and, assisted by his daughter, Vidya Nataraj, rendered a pallavi in Tisra thirputa in 6 speeds (3 in chatusra and 3 in tisra, interspersed in between), accompanied by Anoor Ramakrishna and A. V. Anand. D. Sashikala rendered a Pallavi in the rare tala "Thiribhinna", 13th of the Ashtottthara Shatha Talla, consisting of a laghu, guru and plutha, accompanied by Anoor Dattatreya Sharma on Mridangam. M. Venkateshachalam of Mysore rendered a Pallavi in Mishra Tirputa, Thirisa Nadai

accompanied by M. S. Govindaswamy and V. S. Rajagopal. R. Vedavalli of Madras explained the practical aspects of Pallavi rendition and rendered a Pallavi with the Sahitya in 3 speeds in the Poorvanga and hence named as Anuloma Pallavi. She was supported by M. S. Govindaswamy and Bangalore K. Venkatram. M. P. Ramaswamy of Cochin rendered a Pallavi in Thirisa Thirputa, Khanda Nadai tala accompanied by T. T. Srinivasan and M. T. Rajakesari. G. R. Jaya rendered a Swarakshara (Swara sahitya) pallavi with H. K. Raghavendra and Shivu as accompanists. Doreswamy Iyengar explained the salient features of each Pallavi.

In the second Session chaired by the veteran Violinist R. R. Keshavamurthy, T. S. Sathyavathi rendered a Taala Maalika Pallavi consisting of Rupaka, Misra Chapu, Chatusra Eka, and Chapu, accompanied by M. A. Krishnamurthy on Mridangam. Chengalpet Ranganathan from Madras rendered a Pallavi in Adi, Misra nadai and rendered the same in faster speed with 7 Akshara pulse per stroke in a highly competent way supported by H. P. Ramaehar on mridangam. Padma Gurudutt chose for her Avadhana Pallavi, Misra Chatusra Jhampa matya (10+10=20) in the right hand and Adi Khanda nadai (8x5=40) in the left hand. Her technically perfect

rendition was supported by H. K. Venkata ram and V. Krishna. Rudrapatnam S. Ramakantha chose Bhavapriya, one of the Melathalas for his Pallavi accompanied by Ananthakrishna Sharma. Dr. P. K. Gayathri rendered a Panchamukhi Adi Thala Pallavi and a Panchananada Pallavi in Thrisra Rupaka, supported by B. Dhruvaraj.

In the penultimate session chaired by Veteran vocalist A. Subba Rao. there was an interesting question and answer session in which observers, artistes and several expert musicians participated. Several innovative and educative aspects were clarified and many a doubt in the concert arena was answered.

In the valedictory Session, Prof. T. R. Subramanyam of Delhi University spoke at length, with suitable short demonstrations on how to construct a Pallavi with the necessary infrastructure and to present

an aesthetically pleasant combination with intricate rhythmic structures. He rendered a pallavi to illustrate his comments, which was well received. He was accompanied by S. Seshagiri Rao, and A. V. Anand, On behalf of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Shri Mathur Krishnamurthy London, appreciated the efforts of the Percussive Art Centre in organising a seminar of such educative value which incidentally also turned out to be entertaining. The Workshop itself was well attended by several musicians, and many music students in addition to observers drawn from various faculties, music organisations and teaching institutions.

The Workshop was organised with the help of a subsidy from the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi. The entire sessions have been audio taped and extracts video taped.

K. Venkatram

Shanmukha

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TAMIL NEW YEAR

சாவேரி ராகம்

By

V. Satagopan (U. S. A.)

இந்தக் கட்டுரையில் நமது ஸங்கீத த்ரிமூர்த்திகள் செய்திருக்கும் சாவேரி ராக கீர்த்தனைகள் சிலதைப் பற்றி, எழுதுகிறேன். அவர்களைத் தவிர, இவர்கள் சிஷ்ய பரம்பரையில் வந்த பட்டணம் சுப்ரமண்ய ஐய்யர், வாலாஜாபேட் வெங்கடரமண பாகவதர், மற்ற வாக்கேயக்காரர்களான ஹரிகேச நல்லூர் முத்தையா பாகவதர், பாபநாசம் சிவன், ஸ்வாதித்திருநாள், ஷேத்ரக்நர், வைத்தீஸ்வரன் கோயில் சுப்பராய ஐய்யர், மைசூர் ஸதாஸிவராவ், பெரியசாமி தூரான், வடிவேல், கோடஸ்வர ஐய்யர், கவி குஞ்சரபாரதி முதலியோரும் அநேக ஜாவளி, பதம், வர்ணம் முதலியவைகள் செய்திருக்கிறார்கள். மொத்தத்தில் சாவேரி ராகத்தில் 58 க்கு மேல் உருப்படிகள் இருப்பதாக தெரிகிறது. இத்தனை உருப்படிகள் இருந்தபோதிலும், பழக்கத்தில் இவை எல்லாம் உபயோகத்தில் இல்லை. இந்த வியாஸத்தில் நமது ஸங்கீத மூம்மூர்த்திகள் அருளிய கீர்த்தனைங்கள், பற்றி மட்டும் எழுதுகிறேன்.

1. சாவேரி ராகத்தின் தனிச்சிறப்பு

“காவேரிக்கு நிகரான நதி கிடையாது, சாவேரிக்கு நிகரான ராகம் கிடையாது” என்று தமிழ் பழமொழி, பெருமையுடன் உயர்த்தும் சிறப்பு உடைய ராகம், நமது சாவேரி ராகம்.

ஓளடவ - ஸம்பூர்ண ஸ்வரூபம் கொண்ட சாவேரி, ஸரிமபதஸ் - ஸநிதப மகரிஸ என்ற ஆரோஹண - அவரோஹணத்துடன், மாயாமாள கௌளை என்ற மேளத்தின் ஜனராகமாக விளங்குகிறது அநேக ரஞ்சகப் பிரயோகங்கள் கொண்ட சாவேரி கருணாரஸ பூர்ணமாய், பல வாக்கேயக்காரர்களால் பகவானையும், அம்பானையும், கணபதியையும், சுப்ரமண்யனையும், ஆஞ்சநேயரையும் நாத உபாஸனை மூலம் வழிபட உதவியிருக்கிறது. அநுபவத்தில், சாவேரி ராகப்ரயோகங்களில் அந்தர காந்தாரமும், காகலி நிஷாதமும் மாயாமாள கௌளை என்ற ஜனக ராகத்தில் கேட்கப் படுவதை விட சற்று குறைவாகவே ஸ்புரிக்கப் படுவதைக் காண்கிறோம். இது தவிர, ரிஷபமும், தைவதமும் கம்பித கமக முதலிய அசைவுடன், ஸாவேரி ராக ஸ்வரூபத்தை தனி முறையில் விளக்குகின்றன. இந்த சம்பந்தாயத்தால், காவேரியின் தைவதம் அலாதி அழகு கொண்டு, “சாவேரிதைவதம்” என்ற தனிச் சிறப்புடன் மிளிர்கிறது. இதே ஸம்பந்தாயத்தில், ரிஷபமும் கம்பிதமாய் அசைக்கப்பட்டு, அதனால் ஹரிகேச நல்லூர் முத்தையா பாகவதரால் ச்லேடையாக, ஸாவேரியில் ‘ஸாவே’ ‘ரீயாக’ விளங்குவதாய் விவரிக்கப் பட்டது. சுத்த மத்யமும், கம்பிதஸ்வரமாக உபயோகப்படுத்தப் பட்டு, பஞ்ச மத்தின் சாயை கொஞ்சம் காண்

பித்துக் கொண்டு,ப்ரத்யேக ஸ்வரூபத் துடன் சாவேரி அநுபவத்தில் நிலைத் திருக்கிறது.

ஸர்வ ஸ்வர கமக பாஷாங்க ராக மான சாவேரி, ரக்தி பூர்ணமாய். பக லின் இரண்டாம் ஜாமத்தில் விசேஷ மாக அநுபவிக்கக் கூடிய ராகமாய் ஜ்வலிக்கிறது. கமகங்களால் விசேஷ அழகும், குழைவும் கொண்டுள்ள சாவேரி ராகம், தானம், பல்லவி அமைப்புகளுக்கு சுலபமாக உபயோக மாகிறது. தசவித கமக ஸ்வரூபினி யான அம்பாளை உபாஸித்த ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், கமகங் களுக்கு விசேஷமான சாவேரி ராகத் தில் ஆறு கீர்த்தனங்கள் அம்பாள் மேல் பண்ணியதும் அந்த ராகத்திற்கு அவர் செய்த தகுந்த மரியாதையே. கமகங்களின் நுட்பங்களை தெரிவிக்க விசேஷமாக உதவும் தந்தி வாத்யமான வீணையின் பெருமையை சொல்ல விரும்பும் வைணிகரான ஸத்குரு ஸ்ரீத்யாக ராஜ ஸ்வாமிகள் கமகங் களுக்கு விசேஷமான சாவேரி ராகத்தை தேடி எடுத்து. அந்த ராகத்தில் 'ஸம்ஸாருதலைதேநேமய்யா' என்ற கீர்த்தனத்தை செய்து, வீணை இசையுடன் கண்ணனை ஸத்வஸங்கீத முகமாக துதிப்பவர்களுக்கு ஒரு வித மான குறையும் ஏற்படாது என்ற ரஹஸ்யத்தை தெரிவித்தார்; விளம்ப கால சஞ்சாரங்களை தனி அழகாகக் கொண்டுள்ள சாவேரி கருணாஸம் மாத்திரம் அல்லாது, அம்பாளின் அநுக் ரஹம் கிடைக்க தாமதமாவதால் அநு பவிக்கப்படும் கீர்த்தனஞ்சார்யார்களின் சோகரஸம் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட மனநிலையே யும் விவரிக்க உபயோகப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

(ii)

சாவேரி கீர்த்தனங்களை, மேல்ஷட் ஜமம், கீழ்ஷட்ஜமம், காந்தாரம். ரிஷபம், பஞ்சமம் என்ற எடுப்புகளு டன் ஆரம்பமாகும் வகையில் பிரித்து விளக்கி வருகிறார்கள். உதாரணமாக, ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதரின் "ஸ்ரீராஜகோபால" என்ற க்ருதி மேல்ஷட்ஜமத்திலும், ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா ஸாஸ்த்திரிகளின் "சங்கரி சங்குரு" என்ற க்ருதி கீழ்ஷட்ஜமத் திலும், ஸ்ரீவித்யா விஜஸ்வாமிகளின் பலமுகுலமு" என்ற க்ருதி ரிஷபத் திலும், ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதரின் "கரிகஸப" என்ற க்ருதி காந்தாரத்திலும், மைசூர் ஸதாஸிவ ராவின் "ஸ்ரீகாமகோடி பீட ஸ்திதே" என்ற க்ருதி பஞ்சமத்திலும் ஆரம்பமாவதை நாம் காண்கிறோம் பல செளந்தர்யங்கள் கொண்ட சாவேரி ராககீர்த்தனங்கள் பற்றி இனிமேல் கவனிப்போம்.

2. சாவேரி ராககீர்த்தனங்களும், அவை வழிபடும் தெய்வங்களும்

ஸங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகள் அருளிய 27 சாவேரி ராககீர்த்தனங்களுள் ஒன்று துண்டி கணேசரைப் பற்றிய "கரிகலாபமுகம்" என்ற ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதரின் கீர்த்தனம் மூன்று. க்ருஷ்ண பரமாத் மாவை பற்றியவை. இவை மூன்றும் பின்வருமாறு :

(1) ஸ்ரீவிஜகோபால பாலஸ்ருங் கார லீல-ஸ்ரீதீஷிதர். ஆதி, உகளை.

(2) சாலு சாலு நீயுக்குலு- நெளக சரித்திரகீர்த்தனை, ஸ்ரீத்யாகப் ரஹ்ம்மம், திரிபுடை தாளம்.

(3) ஸம்ஸாருதலைதே - ஸ்ரீத்யாக ப்ரஹ்ம்மம், ஆதி, 1களை.

ஒரு கீர்த்தனம் ஸ்ரீக்ருஷ்ண பர மாத்மாவின் திருமேனியில் சேரும் துளசி தேவியைப் பற்றிய "துளசி ஜகஜ்ஜனனி" என்பது இந்த கீர்த் தனம் ரூபக தாளத்தில் அமைக்கப் பட்டுள்ளது.

பத்து கீர்த்தனங்கள், அம்பாளைப் போற்றும்வகையில் ஸங்கீத மும்மூர்த் திகளால் செய்யப்பட்டவை. இந்த கீர்த்தனங்களில், திருவையாறு தர்ம ஸம்வர்த்தனி, நாகப்பட்டினம் நீலாய தாக்ஷி, தஞ்சை பங்காரு காமாக்ஷி, திருவாணைக்கா அகிலாண்டேஸ்வரி, திருவொற்றியூர் த்ரிபுரஸுந்தரி ஆக, அம்பாள்கள் கொண்டாடப்பட்டிருக் கின்றனர். இந்த கீர்த்தனங்களின் வாக்கியங்கள் லலிதா ஸஹஸ்ரநாமம் லலிதா-த்ரிசதி, தேவிபாகவதம், தேவி மஹாத்ம்யம், தேவி உபநிஷத்துக்கள் என்ற க்ரந்தங்கள் விளக்கும் தத் தவங்களுக்கு அடிப்படையாக நின்று, நமது அம்பாள் பக்தியை வளர்க்க உதவுகிறது. ஸங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகள் நமக்களித்திருக்கும் பத்து கீர்த்தனங் களும், அவை வழிபடும் தேவிகளும் பின்வருமாறு பிரிகின்றன :

(1) ஸங்கரி ஸங்குரு (அகிலாண் டேஸ்வரி), ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா ஸாஸ்திரிகள் திஸ்ர தாளம்.

(2) கன்னதல்லி (திருவொற்றி யூர் த்ரிபுரஸுந்தரி), ஸ்ரீத்யாக ராஜ ஸ்வாமிகள், ஆதிதாளம்.

(3) கர்மமே பல வந்தமாயெ தல்லி (நாகப்பட்டினம் நீலாயதாக்ஷி, ஸ்ரீத்யாகராஜ ஸ்வாமிகள்)

(4) ஜனனி நதஜனபரிபாலினி (காமாக்ஷி) - ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா சாஸ்திரிகள் ஆதி தாளம்.

(iii)

(5) ஸ்ரீபதிமுக விரசிதபூஜ்யே (காமாக்ஷி) ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், ஆதி தாளம்.

(6) ஸாரஸாக்ஷி ஸதா பாஹி மாம் (காமாக்ஷி). ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், த்ரிபுடைதாளம்.

(7) துருசுக க்ருபஜுசி (திருவை யாறு தர்மஸம்வர்த்தனி), ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், ஆதி தாளம்

(8) பராசக்தி மதுபராதா (திரு வை யாறு தர்மஸம்வர்த்தனி), ஸ்ரீ த்யாகராஜஸ்வாமிகள், ஆதி தாளம்.

(9) நீவுப்ரரோவவலெனம்ம (திரு வையாறு தர்ம ஸம்வர்த்தினி), ஸ்ரீத்யாகராஜஸ்வாமிகள், ஆதிதாளம்.

(10) ராவே மாயம்மா, பங்காரு காமாக்ஷி (தஞ்சாவூர் ஸ்ரீஸ்யாமா ஸாஸ்திரிகள்) ஆதிதாளம்.

மிகுந்த 12 கீர்த்தனங்களும், ஸ்ரீராமபிரானைப் பற்றி ஸத்குரு ஸ்ரீ த்யாகராஜஸ்வாமிகளால் பல பக்தி நிலைகளில் பாடப்பட்டு சாவேரி ராகத் தின் பல கமக சஞ்சாரநுட்பங்களை விளக்குகின்றன. இந்த சாவேரி கீர்த் தனங்கள் பின்வருமாறு :

(1) இந்த கன்ஸ்தெல்பதரமா ஜகதீஸ்வர நேகிதரமா நீதோ-திவ்ய நாமம், த்ரிபுடைதாளம்.

(2) இந்த தாமஸ்மை தே நெந் தனி ஸைரிந்து ஏமி சேயுதுராம- த்ரிபுடைதாளம்.

(3) ஜேஜேஸீதாராம், ஜேஜே ரகுராம் - த்ரிபுடைதாளம்.

(4) திருநா லோனி துத்த - ப்ரஹ்லாத பக்தி விஜய கீர்த்தனை ஜம்பை தாளம்.

(5) தரிதாபு லேகவேடிதே, தய ராதே மோ ஸ்ரீராம-ஆதிதாளம்.

(6) பலமு குலமு ஏல ராமபக்தி காரணமு - ஆதி, திஸ்ரகதி.

(7) ராமம் பஜேஹம் ஸதா ராகுஸ குலபீமம் - ஆதி, 1களை.

(8) ராமபாணத்ராண செளரி மே மநி பொகடுதுரா, ஓமனஸா - ஆதி, 2களை.

(9) ராமா பிராமா ரகுராம - ஜம்பை தாளம்.

(10) ஸ்ரீராம ராம ராம ஸீதா ஹ்ருஜ்ஜலதிஸோம - ஆதி, 2களை.

(11) ஸ்ரீராம ஆஸ்ரிதுலமு காமா நேரமா, ப்ரோவபாரமா - திவ்யநாமம், த்ரிபுடைதாளம்.

(12) ஸ்ரீராம சந்த்ர ராகவ ஸகல லோகதார த்வமேவ மாமவ - திவ்யநாமம், ஆதி, 2களை.

கீர்த்தன அர்த்தங்கள் தேடும் வகையில், விக்னேஸ்வரரைப் பற்றிய கீர்த்தனம் பற்றி முதலில் எழுதி, பின்னர் அவர் தாயாரான அம்பாள் பற்றியும், அதன் பின்னர் அம்பாளின் ஸஹோதரனான பகவான் கீர்த்தனங்கள் பற்றியும், கடைசியாக பகவான் திருமேனியை அலங்கரிக்கும் துலஸி மாதாவைப் பற்றியும் எழுதுகிறேன்.

3. ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர், கொண்டாடும் ஁ண்டி கணேசர்

ஸ்ரீ முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் ஜ்யேஷ்டராஜா என்று வணங்கப்படும் கணேசரைப் பற்றி 24 கீர்த்தனங்கள் செய்திருக்கிறார், இவைகளுள் 16 திருவாரூர் கேஷத்ரத்தில் உள்ள ஷோடச கணபதிகளைப் பற்றியது. அந்த 16 கீர்த்தனங்களுள் ஒன்று ஁ண்டி கணேசரை வணங்கும் சாவேரி ராக கீர்த்தனம். ஁ண்டி கணேசரின் பரம பவித்ரமான ஸ்வரூபம் காசிக்ஷேத்ரத்தில் ப்ரதிஷ்டை பண்ணப்பட்டது. அந்த காசி வாஸியின் அம்சபூதர், காவேரிக்கரையில், திருவாரூர் கேஷத்ரத்தில் ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதரால் மங்களா ஸாஸனம் செய்யப்பட்டார். இந்த கீர்த்தனத்தை லேட் ஸ்ரீமான் G. N. பாலசுப்பிரமணியம் அழகாகப்பாடியது உண்டு. இந்த கீர்த்தனம் “கரிகலாப முகம் ஁ண்டி கணேசம் பஜரே சித்த’ காவேரிதடஸ்திதம் சாவேரிராகநுதம்”, என்ற பல்லவியுடன் ஆரம்பமாகிறது. பல்லவியில் ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர், என் மனமே, காவேரிக்கரையில் அமர்ந்து, சாவேரி ராகத்தால் வணங்கப்படும் ஁ண்டி கணேசனை நீ வணங்கு என்றார். சின்னஞ்சிறு துதிக்கை உடைய பாலகணபதியான ஁ண்டி கணேசனை வணங்கி அருள் பெறு என்று சொல்கிறார். அநுபல்லவியில் அவனுடைய உறவினர்களைச் சொல்லி, அவன் புகழைப் பின் வருமாறு பாடுகிறார்.

“ஹரி ஹயாதி ஸகல தேவதா ராதித பதாம்புஜம்

கிரிஜா தனுனம் விஜிதமனஸிஜம் குரு குஹாக்ரஜம் (கரிகலாப)

அநுபல்லவியில், காணபத்யம் என்ற ஷண்மதங்களில் ஒன்று மத தத்வ ப்ரகாரம், கணபதி எல்லா தெய்வங்களாலும் கொண்டாடப்படும்

விக்னேஸ்வரன் என்ற கருத்தை ‘ஹரிஹயாதி ஸகல தேவதா ஆராதித, பதாம்புஜம்” என்று தெரிவித்தார். ஷண்மத ஸ்தாபகரான ஸ்ரீ ஆதிசங்கரர், கணபதி மஹாத்மயத்தை ஸ்ரீ கணேச பஞ்சரத்னம் என்ற ஸ்தோத்ரத்தில் அழகாகச் சொல்லி, கணேசன் எல்லா தெய்வங்களாலும் கொண்டாடப்படும் தெய்வம் என்ற கருத்திற்கு பின்வருமாறு ஆதாரம் கொடுக்கிறார் :

நதேதராதிபீகரம் நவோதிதார்க் கபாஸ்வரம்
நமத் சுராரிகிரீஜரம் நதாதிகா பதுகரம்

ஸுரேச்வரம் நிதிச்வரம் கஜேச்வரம் கணேச்வரம் மஹேச்வரம் தமா ஸ்ரயே பராத்தபரம் நிரந்தரம் ||

கணபதி உதிக்கும் சூர்யனைப் போல் ஜ்வலித்துக்கொண்டு, விக்னங்களை விலக்கிக்கொண்டு, தேவர்கள் அசுரர்களால் வழிபடப்பட்டு, தெய்வங்களுக்கெல்லாம் தெய்வமாகவும், அஷ்ட ஐஸ்வர்யங்களுக்கு ஈஸ்வரனாகவும், கஜேஸ்வரனாகவும் மஹேச்வரனாகவும் விளங்கிவருவதை ஸ்ரீ ஆதிசங்கரர் இங்கு சொல்லி அந்த கணேசனைத்தான் சரணம் அடைந்திருப்பதாகச் சொல்கிறார். இந்த கருத்தையே ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதரும் “ஹரிஹயாதி ஸகல தேவதாராதித பதாம்புஜம்” என தெரிவிக்கிறார். ஹரிஹயன் என்ற ஹயக்ரீவன் முதலான எல்லாதெய்வங்களும் ஁ண்டி கணேசனை வழிபடுவதை ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர் அநுபல்லவியின் முதல் வரியில் சொல்கிறார். இரண்டாவது வரியில், ஁ண்டி கணேசனின் உறவினர்களையும், அவருடைய நேம

நிஷ்டைகளையும் “கிரிஜாதனுஜம், விஜித மனஸிஜம், குருகுஹாக்ரஜம் கரிகலாபமுகம் கணேசம் பஜரே” என விவரித்தார் “கிரிஜாதனுஜம்” என்ற நாமம் மூலம், கணேசர் பார்வதியின் புத்ரர் என்பதை அறிவித்தார். பார்வதி தனது பர்த்தாவானகாமேசனின் முகத்தைப் பார்த்ததாலே சருஷ்டிக்கப்பட்டவர் கணேசர் என்ற கருத்தை லலிதா ஸஹஸ்ரவாக்யமான “காமேச்வர முகாலோக கல்பித ஸ்ரீகணேச்வரா” என்பது குறிப்பிடுகிறது. கிரிஜா தனுஜனரான கணேசர், அம்மாவுக்கு மிகவும் உபகாரமான பிள்ளை என்பதை அடுத்த லலிதா ஸஹஸ்ர ராம வாக்யமான மகாப்ரஹ்ணேச நிர்பின்ன விக்னயந்தர் “ரஹர்ஷிதா” என்பது சொல்கிறது. பண்டாசுவத சமயம், தன் தாயாருக்கு உதவியாக நின்று விசக்ரனின் யந்த்ரத்தை பிளந்து, தன் தாயாரை சந்தோஷப்படுத்திய ஸம்பவத்தை இந்த ஸஹஸ்ரநாமம் விளக்குகிறது. சுப்ரமணியனுக்கு முன்பிறந்த கிரிஜா தனுஜர் இவர் என்பதை குருகுஹா, ரஜம் “என்ற அனுபல்லவி வாக்யம் குறிப்பிடுகிறது. மிகுந்த அனுபல்லவி நாமமான “விஜித மனஸிஜம்” என்பது ஁ண்டி கணேச இந்திய நிக்ரஹத்தை அனுஷ்டித்து, ஜிதேந்த்ரியப்ரஹ்ம் சாரியாக விளங்கி மன்மதனை வென்றப்பாவத்தை வணங்குகிறது. இதேகருத்தை “கணராஜேன ஸம்ரக்ஷிதோஹம்” என்ற தனது ஆரபிகீர்த்தனத்தில், ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர், “கானனஸ்தித ப்ரஹ்ம்மசர்யணே கணராஜேன ஸம்ரக்ஷிதோஹம்” என வெளியிட்டார்.

஁ண்டி கணேசரைப் பற்றிய சாவேரிராக கீர்த்தனவாக்யங்கள்.

யோக சாஸ்த்ரங்கள், ஆகம ஸாஸ்த்ரங்கள், காணபத்ய தந்த்ரங்கள் சொல்லும் கருத்துக்களைத் தன்னுள் அடக்கிகொண்டுள்ளன. சரண வாக்யங்கள் பின்வருமாறு:

“மூலாதார சதுர்தள பங்கஜமத்யஸ்தம், மோதகஹஸ்தம் முனிஜனஹ்ருத் கமலஸ்தம்
பாலசந்த்ரம் ஸுமுகம் கருணாஸாந்த்ரம், பாஸாங்குஸ தரம்பத்மகரம் ஸுந்தரம்
நீலக்ரீவ குமாரம் நீரத ஸோபாஹாரம், பாவித பக்தம் தீரம்
அபாரம் வாரம் வாரம் (கரிகலாபமுகம்)

சரணத்தின் முதல்வரியில், குண்டிகணேசரை, “மூலாதார சதுர்தள பங்கஜமத்யஸ்தம்” என ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர் நமஸ்கரித்துக்கொள்கிறார். புராண வாரணமேன ஆதிசங்கரரால் நமஸ்கரித்துக்கொள்ளப்பட்ட கணேசரை, கணபதி உபநிஷத், ப்ரபஞ்சசார தந்த்ரம் ஸ்ரீகணபதி பகவத் தத்வம் முதலிய க்ரந்தங்கள் நான்கு இதழ்கள் கொண்ட தாமரைமேல் மூலாதார சக்ரத்தில் அமர்ந்திருப்பதைச் சொல்கின்றன. மூலாதாரம், ஸ்வாதிஷ்டானம், மணிபூரம், அனாஹதம், விசுத்தம், ஆக்ஞா என்ற ஆறு சக்ரங்கள் மனிதர்கள் உடலில் இருப்பதை யோக சாஸ்த்ரங்கள் நமக்கு விளக்குகின்றன. மூலாதாரம் என்பது, முதுகு எலும்பு சிறியதாகிக்குறுகி உள்ள இடத்தில் (Junction of sacrum and the Tail end of the back bone”) இருப்பதாக நாம் அறிகிறோம். அங்கு 4 இதழ்கள் கொண்ட தாமரைமேல், மூலாதார சக்ரத்தில் கணேசன்

இளம் சூர்யனைப்போல் (நவோதிதார்க்கபாஸ்வரம்) ப்ரகாசித்துக்கொண்டு இருப்பதை சிவஸம்ஹிதை, கேரண்டஸம்ஹிதை முதலான யோக சாஸ்த்ரங்கள் விளக்குகின்றன. மூலாதாரத்தில் இருப்பவர் கணேசர் அல்லது குண்டலினி சக்தி என யோக சம்ஹிதைகள் சொல்கின்றன. ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர் குறிப்பிடும் “மூலாதார சதுர்தளபங்கஜமத்யஸ்தம்” என்பதற்கு ஆதாரமான ஸம்ஹிதை ஸ்லோகங்கள் பின்வருமாறு:

ஆதாரபத்மேதத்வி யோநிர்யஸ்யாஸ்தி கந்தத:|
பரிஸ்புரத்வாதிசாந்த சதுர்வர்ணம் சதுர்தலம்||

4 தளங்கள் கொண்டு, ஒவ்வொரு தளமும் மற்ற ஒருவர்ணம் உள்ளதாய் ஒரு தாமரை மூலாதாரத்தில் காணப்படுகிறது என மேற்காணும் சிவஸம்ஹிதை ஸ்லோகம் சொல்கிறது. நான்கு வர்ணங்களும் ‘வ’ என்ற அக்ஷரத்துடன் ஆரம்பித்து ‘ஸ’ என்ற அக்ஷரத்துடன் முடிந்து, அழகாக ஜ்வலிக்கிறது என தெரிந்து கொள்கிறோம்.

4 தளம் கொண்ட மூலாதார சக்ரத்தினுள், ஒரு த்வாரம் காணப்படுகிறது. அந்த த்வாரத்தினுள் சூர்யனுக்கு சமமான தேஜஸ் ஒன்று காணப்படுகிறது என்பதை மற்ற ஒரு சிவஸம்ஹிதை ஸ்லோகம் பின்வருமாறு சொல்கிறது:

மூலாதாரே ஹி யத்பத்மம் சதுஷ்பத்ரம் வ்யஸ்திதம்|
தத்ர மத்யே ஹி யா யோனிஸ்தஸ்யாம் ஸூர்யோ வ்யவஸ்தித:||

கேரண்டஸம்ஹிதை என்ற யோக நூலும், மூலாதார சக்ரத்தில், நாக பாசம் கையில் அணிந்த கணேசன் குண்டலினி சக்தி ரூபத்தில் இருப்பதைக் கூறுகிறது. குண்டலினிக்கு, ஸர்ப்ப ரூபத்தில் வளைந்த ப்ரணவ ஸ்வரூபம் உண்டு. மஹத்தான ஒளியுள்ள தீபம்போல், மூலாதாரத்தில் காணப்படும் ஆதார சக்தியை ப்ரஹ்மம் ஸ்வரூபமாக நினை. அந்த தேஜஸ்ஸை மூலாதாரத்தில் த்யானிப்பதால் ஸர்வ மங்களங்களும் உண்டாகும் என கேரண்ட (Gheranda) ஸம்ஹிதை ஸ்லோகம் பின்வருமாறு கூறி: “மூலாதார சதுர்தள பங்கஜ மத்யஸ்தம்” என்ற தீக்ஷிதரின் சாஸ்த்ரப்ரமாண வாக்யத்திற்கு ஆதாரம் அளிக்கிறது:

மூலாதாரே குண்டலினி புஜகாகாரரூபினி|
ஜீவாத்மா திஷ்டதி தத்ர ப்ரதீபகலிகாக்ருதி:|
த்யாயேத்தேஜோமயம் ப்ரஹ்மம் தேஜோத்யானம் பராத்பரம்||

மூலாதாரத்தில் இருக்கும் தேஜஸ்கணேசனே என்ற தத்வத்தை மற்ற ஒரு சிவசம்ஹிதை ஸ்லோகம் பின்வருமாறு சொல்கிறது:

மூலாதாரே ரஸ்தி யத்பத்மம் சதுர்தலஸமன்விதம்|
தன்மத்யே வாக்பவம் பீஜம் விஸ்புரந்தம் தடித்ப்ரபா||

மூலாதாரத்தில் நான்கு இதழ்களுடன் இருக்கும் பத்மத்தின் மத்தியில், பள, பளவென்று மின்னலைப்போல் ப்ரகாசித்துக்கொண்டு வாக்பவ

பீஜம் விளங்குகிறது என இந்த ஸ்லோகம் சொல்லுகிறது. வாக்பவ பீஜம் என்பது படிப்புக்கு அதிகாரியான கணபதியைக் குறிக்கும் சொல். வித்யா தேவனான விக்னேஸ்வரனை மந்த்ரசாஸ்த்ரங்கள் மூலம் அறிந்தவர் ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர். மூலாதாரத்திலிருந்து ஸுஷும்னா நாடி புறப்பட்டு, மற்ற ஜந்து சக்ரங்களைத் தொட்டுக்கொண்டு ப்ரஹ்மம் ரந்த்ரம் என்ற த்வாரத்தின் வழியாக ஆயிரம் தளங்கள் கொண்ட தாமரையில் வீற்றிருக்கும் அம்பாளை அடைகிறது. ஸுஷும்னா என்ற நாடியால் ஸஹஸ்ரார பத்மத்துடன் தொடர்பு கொண்ட மூலாதார கணபதி யோகசித்தி அடைவதற்கு ஆதார புருஷன் என்ற தத்வத்தை ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர் தன் சாவேரி ராக கீர்த்தனத்திலும், மற்ற ஒரு ஸ்ரீராக கீர்த்தனத்திலும் “ஸ்ரீமூலாதார சக்ர வினாயக அமல்ய வர ப்ரதாயக” என்று வணங்கிக்கொண்டார்.

மூலாதாரசக்ரத்தில் வீற்றிருக்கும் குண்டிகணேசரின் ரூப செளந்தர்யத்தையும், அவர் கையில் உள்ள திவ்யா பரணங்கள், மங்கள வஸ்துக்களை மற்ற சரண வாக்யங்களில் பின்வருமாறு ஸ்ரீதீக்ஷிதர் சொல்கிறார்:

“மோதகஹஸ்தம் முனிஜனஹ்ருத்கமலஸ்தம்
பாலசந்த்ரம் ஸுமுகம் கருணாஸாந்த்ரம்
பாஸாங்குஸதரம் பத்மகரம் ஸுந்தரம்
நீலக்ரீவ குமாரம் நீரத ஸோபாஹாரம்
பாவிதபக்தம் தீரம் அபாரம் வாரம் வாரம் (கரிகலாபமுகம்)”

“மோதக ஹஸ்தம்...பாலசந்தரம்
ஸுமுகம், கருணாஸாந்தரம், ...பத்ம
கரம், ஸுந்தரம், நீலக்ரீவ குமாரம்,
நீரதஸோபாஹாரம்...குண்டி கணே
சம்பஜரே” என சரண வாக்யப் பகுதி
களில் சொல்லுகிறார். கையில் கொழுக்
கட்டையுடன் அம்ருதமான ஞானத்
தை தர இருக்கும் ஸ்ரீ குண்டி கணே
ஸனை “மோதகஹஸ்தம்” என்று
அழைப்பது, ஸ்ரீ ஆதிசங்கரரின் மற்ற
ஒரு ஸ்ரீகணேச பஞ்சரத்ன ஸ்லோகத்
தை ஞாபகப்படுத்துகிறது. இந்த
ஸ்லோகம் பின் வருமாறு:

முதா கராத் த மோதகம் ஸதாவி
முத்தி ஸாதகம்
கலாதராவத்ம்ஸகம் வில ஸி லோ
கரக்ஷகம்।
அனய கைக நாயகம் வினாஸிதே
பதைத் யகம்
நத ஸுபா ஸுநாஸகம் நமாமி தம்
வினயகம்॥

எப்போதும் ஸுமுகராய், பிறைச்
சந்த்ரனை தலையில் அணிந்து, கருணை
யுடன் பக்தர்களுக்கு மோக்ஷசாம்ராஜ்
யம் அளித்து, அவர்களை காக்கும் தீர
னாக விளங்கி கையில் கொழுக்கட்டை
யுடன் ஸேவைதந்து, கஜாஸுரனை
வதம் செய்து, அமங்களங்களை
அழித்து ஈடு. இணையில்லாதவராக
விளங்கும் கணேஸனை நான் சாஷ்டாங்க
மாக வணங்குகிறேன் என ஸ்ரீ ஆதிசங்
கரர் இந்த ஸ்லோகத்தில் கூறுகிறார்.
குண்டி கணேசரைப்பற்றிய கீர்த்தன
வாக்யத்தில் காணும் பல சரணவாக்
யங்களின் எதிரொலியை மேற்காணும்
ஆதிசங்கரர் ஸ்லோகத்தில் காண்
கிறோம். நீலகண்டனின் அழகுப்
பிள்ளை, மருதுவான கையுடன்,

,பாஸம், அங்குசம் என்ற சின்னங்களை
தரித்து பக்தர்களை அதி விமரிசை
யுடன் ரஷிப்பதை மிகுந்த சரணவாக்
யங்கள் கூறுகின்றன. நீரத ஸோபா
ஹரம், ஸுந்தரம் என்றபடி கார்மேகத்
திருமேனியுடன், ஸர்வாங்க செளந்தர்
யம்கொண்ட குண்டி கணேசன்
பக்தர்களை காப்பாற்றுவதையே வ்ரத
மாகக்கொண்டவன் என ஸ்ரீ தீக்ஷிதர்
சொல்கிறார். அப்பேற்பட்ட குண
சம்பத் உள்ளவனை எப்போதும்
வணங்கு எனத் தன் மனதிடம் சொல்
கிறார்.

மிகுந்த சரண வாக்யம் “முனி
ஜனஹருத்கமலஸ்தம்” என்பதாகும்.
அவர் அகஸ்த்யர், வளிஷ்டர், வ்யாஸர்
முதலிய மஹர்ஷிகளின் ஹ்ருதய
கமலத்தில் வசிப்பவர் என இந்த
சரண வாக்யம் சொல்கிறது. இதே
கருத்தை “வாமாங்க ஸ்தித்யா, வல்ல
பயாஸ்லிஷ்ட்டம் வாரண வதனம்
தேவம் வந்தேஹம்” என்ற அடாண
ராக கீர்த்தனத்தில், வளிஷ்ட்டர்
முதலிய தபஸ்விகளால் பூஜிக்கப்பட்டு
அவர்கள் ஹ்ருதய கமலத்தில் விளங்கு,
வதை “அஷ்டாங்க யோக வர ஹடாண
வாதி ஜயவளிஷ்டாதி தபோதன ஸேவித
கணநாதம்” என ஸ்ரீ தீக்ஷிதர் வெளியிட்
டார். இதே ரீதியில், “வாதாபி கண
பதிம்” என்ற ஹம்ஸத்வனிராக கீர்த்
தனத்தில், “புராகுமப ஸம்பவமுனிவர
ப்ரபூஜிதம்...மூலாதார கேஷத்ரஸ்திதம்”
என்று சொல்லி, கணேஸர் கும்ப ஸம்
பவர் என்ற அகஸ்த்ய முனிவரால்
ஆரதிக்கப்பட்டு, மூலாதார கேஷத்
ரத்தில் அமர்ந்திருக்கிறார் என்று
சொல்லி “முனிஜன ஹ்ருத்கமலஸ்தி
தம்” என்ற சரண வாக்யத்திற்கு
மேலும் விளக்கமளித்தார்.

(தொடரும்)

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